# The Kashmiri Pandits

## A Study of Cultural Choice in North India

HENNY SENDER

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The Kashmiri Pandits have long played a pivotal role in Indian politics, and made outstanding contributions to the society and culture they have participated in. A highly literate and aware community, they also wrote extensively and maintained journals in which community problems, rising from the community's response to changing conditions, were actively discussed. They thus provide invaluable material for the study of a community as a minority group.

The first part of this study attempts to present a balanced and documented history of the Pandits in Kashmir, juxtaposing hard data and known events with various versions of the legendary history of the community. An important focus of the later analysis is the use made, by a group vulnerable to changes in the 'host' society, of reconstructed versions of historical tradition, when the need to conform assumes primary importance.

This need became crucial in the course of the decline of Mughal power in Delhi, when new systems of education and administration were introduced by the British rulers. By the end of the nineteenth century, the Kashmiri Pandit role as a cultural 'bridge' between the Mughal Muslim culture they had adapted to, and the Western/ Brahmanical culture they now aspired to, came to be seen as a liability.

The slow erosion of the Kashmiri Pandits' participation in the Mughal culture and its syncretic values is the theme of the last section of the work. The author traces the extent to which, by 1930, the politics of Narendranath overshadowed those of Nehru and Sapru, indicating the changed nature of the Kashmiri self-image.

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# Preface

This study came to life after my arrival in India. I had read all the secondary material before; but that material consisted only of information about the most prominent Pandits and dealt with them as individuals rather than as members of the Kashmiri Pandit community.

The first two months of my visit to India were not very productive. The history of the Kashmiri Pandits is found neither in the National Archives nor in the new areas of Delhi where post-1947 immigrants have settled. It was in Allahabad, where I was assigned to work under the mentorship of Professor Ravinder Kumar (now Director of the Nehru Memorial Library, New Delhi) that the thesis from which this book has emerged, materialized. The Allahabad Kashmiri Association has dozens of members. Most of them can trace their history on the plains at least several generations. To them I gave a long questionnaire which I had drawn up and with them began my interviews. From these interviews came material for many of the themes in this study.

Interviews were especially helpful in illuminating questions of cultural identity and social change. Many of the older women were surprisingly perceptive. They were able to compare their customs with those of newer arrivals as well as with the Pandits of Kashmir itself; and they were able to comment knowingly upon the process of change. To spend an afternoon with three generations of women or men from one family, to follow the response of the younger to the older, was itself an education. I asked many questions not directly relevant to the thesis and frequently these elicited some of the most revealing responses. Often I would end up listening to a debate between generations (on the wisdom of marriage within the community, for example); and from this sort of encounter I obtained a much stronger sense of what it has meant to be a Kashmiri Pandit than I could ever have derived from books. Such interviews were really my starting point. Gradually patterns emerged, revealing some of the most important regional centres, the most influential community leaders, the most intractable problems, and the most meaningful achievements.

Written material about the Pandits, most of it published privately, invariably came to me as a result of personal contacts. I found very little in official archives or public libraries. For example, Pran Nath Pandit provided me with copies of the community's journals from Lahore and Moradabad. P. N. Pushp unearthed copies of an old Lucknow journal for me. Many Pandits showed me family trees and short handwritten manuscripts written during the youth of their grandfathers. For each find, however, I was told far more of lost or discarded material. The interviews and the search for materials frequently served to remind me that I was struggling against time.

Even when the Pandits did not know the location of material, they would often be aware of its existence. One invaluable source was the *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i Kashmir*. This contains information about most of the Pandits who wrote either in Persian or Urdu and includes samples of their work. The copy I saw originally belonged to Tej Bahadur Sapru. It was lent to me by the Chairman of the Urdu department at Allahabad University. Few contemporary Pandits have seen this *tazkirah*, and when they heard that I had located a copy, they were eager to see this prize.

The choice of this topic turns out to have been very fortunate, although before my trip to India I had wondered about this. The Kashmiris I met were invariably generous with their time and their friendship. Kashmiri Pandits are very proud of their history and extremely conscious of their identity. To them it did not appear at all incongruous that someone should come thousands of miles to ask them about their past. Their concern for this investigation and their solicitude for its author provided further motivation for completion of this work.

I was also fortunate in that my formal advisors were my real mentors. Professor Robert Frykenberg has guided many students through that tortuous period between prelims and orals. Yet I felt that I was his only student in the time I worked with him. He gave me such vast quantities of patience, attention, kindness, and encouragement that I don't understand how he had enough for any other student. As I wrote this preface, he was poring over the body of the thesis; editing and improving it as if he had no additional duties. At scholarly gatherings he always has a circle of former students around him, of which I shall be proud to be a part.

The welcome I received at Allahabad was only one of the many

things I owe to Professor A. K. Narain. Wherever I went in India there were people looking out for me because of his invisible, sheltering influence.

The Indian Government requires that a student doing research in India have an official supervisor. Professor Ravinder Kumar more than fulfilled that requirement. But beyond that, he spent many hours sharing ideas and giving suggestions. My debt to Professor Kumar and his wife is immeasurable.

When I arrived in India, I had in hand a massive letter containing numerous ideas about how to uncover the Pandits. This letter came from Dr Christopher Bayly of St Catherine's College, Cambridge. Since then I have met several other budding scholars, each with similar letters from Dr Bayly. His knowledge seems boundless.

While in Allahabad, I frequently received notes delivered to the hostel and to the history department with valuable bits of information from Major John Harrison, Reader of History at S.O.A.S. (London). He probably knows more about Allahabad than anyone else. It was a delight to experience the city through his eyes.

To my Urdu teacher, Professor M. U. Menon, I owe thanks both for transmitting much of his knowledge of the Urdu language and his love for Urdu literature. Dr G. Alam of Manchester Polytechnic also helped me with translations and did some of the most difficult, Persianized Urdu for me. Numerous others helped: Mahendra and Sheela Verma, Frank Conlon, Lucy Carroll, Richard Barnett, Kenneth Jones, Paul Brass, Burton Stein, B. N. Pandey, Thomas R. Metcalf, and, especially, John Richards, Joseph Elder, and Jack Wells. To the American Institute of Indian Studies (the AIIS), which provided funds, and to Mr P. R. Mehendiratta and Mrs Santwana Nigam, whose kindness smoothed my way, recognition is due. All of the above deserve my appreciation and gratitude.

The list of the people I interviewed is also the list of those who made this thesis possible. Mrs S. Sapru and her two daughters and her nephew practically adopted me while I was in Allahabad. Mrs Kamla Sapru and Mrs R. K. Nehru were always eager to rescue me from the hostel for a meal. Also in Allahabad: Mr Jiwan Lal Dar, Mr O. N. Sharga, Mr P. N. Bakshi, Mr S. N. Mulla and his family, and especially Mr S. N. Katju and his family. The staff of the history department, especially Mrs Pant, was wonderful. In

Lucknow, my greatest debt is to the Chakbast family. I must also mention Mr P. K. Kaul, Mr Inder Dar, Mr S. N. Kitchloo, Mr Amar Nath Kaul, and Raja Guru. Even more people were available in Delhi: Mr M. K. Kaul, Mr U. K. Kaul, G. K. Handoo, M. N. and R. N. Haksar, J. N. Bahadur, J. P. Taimini, A. N. Mulla, P. M. Kaul, S. Dar, B. L. Raina, P. N. Bazaz, J. K. Kitchloo. Professor T. N. Madan was my unofficial supervisor in Delhi. In Kashmir, P. N. Pushp, R. C. Kak, M. K. Taing, and F. M. Hassnain all helped to provide information. Grateful thanks are due to the family of Diwan Anand Kumar for letting me have access to their collection of family and community photographs; to Mr K. N. Sapru for important photographs of his grandfather, and to The Nehru Memorial Museum and Library for photographs of Motilal Nehru, K. N. Katju, B. N. Dar, Amar Nath Atal and Sukhdeo Prasad.

The first Pandit I met in Delhi was Pran Nath Jalali. Jalali Sahib is not a conventional Pandit. A journalist who retains a journalist's sense of detachment, he found my interest in his community more amusing than admirable. While in Srinagar, I stayed with Jalali Sahib and his dear Bengali wife. All my successes in Kashmir I owe to his intercession. Some of my most memorable experiences, such as an encounter with the *pandas* of Matan (a sacred place for Kashmiri Pandits) were arranged by him. But it is for my evenings rather than my days, for friendship rather than aid, that I want most to thank the Jalalis: for the times we sat around the kitchen table talking far into the night about Kashmiri Pandits and about everything else under the sun.

And finally I wish to acknowledge my debt to Pran Nath Pandit. Pandit Sahib embodied all that is best in the tradition of Kashmiri Pandits. When I first met him at his home in New Delhi, it was a hot day in May. He was clad in white pajamas and a kurta, sitting under a fan which was not generating nearly enough of a breeze. But as he talked, he seemed to throw off the torpor of that summer day. The community was important to him and he very much wanted to convey his understanding of it. There was not much overtly Kashmiri in his home. It was all in his head and his being. At times Pandit Sahib told me of his life and of his father and grandfather. Sometimes he took me to the homes of neighbouring Pandits. At other times I found guests in his living room who were asked to tell their tales. Pandit Sahib was a wonderful teacher. I

could always bring him my questions. But my favourite moments were those when Pandit Sahib recited. For Kashmiri Pandits such as Pandit Sahib, literature was an especially important part of life.

His death in April 1986 was a great loss to his community and his friends. There is an Urdu word, *sharif*, which is usually translated as 'gentleman'. It has certain class connotations. But the spirit of the term has more to do with cultural attainments and with a certain grace. The Kashmiri Pandits who participated in Mughal court culture were *sharif log* ('gentle folk'). It was as much from Pandit Sahib's company as from his words that I came to understand what it means to have this quality. It is this which is such an essential part of the Pandit heritage.

# Introduction

This volume is the latest in a series of studies of social groups. Frank Conlon has recently published a study of a section of the Saraswat Brahmans of west India. His work shows 'how the broad currents of political, economic, religious, and social change have altered or directed the development of a jati and its members.' Karen Leonard has chosen to stress changes in the social structure of the Kayasths of Hyderabad by correlating marital patterns with economic strategies of kin groups. Thomas Timberg shows how the Marwari community network contributed to their success as all-India entreprelneurs. I have emphasized the shifting cultural attributes of the Pandits of Kashmir.

The Kashmiri Pandits are almost an ideal choice for a study of this kind. Beyond the merits of studying a social group by using both internal community sources and official material, Pandits have long played a pivotal role in Indian society. They have contributed leadership to Indian politics out of all proportion to their numbers. They have also made important contributions to Indian literature. To recall their participation in a culture that is slowly being extinguished may serve to revive what was best in that culture.

The material presented herein comes from a variety of sources. Primary material came from the Urdu community journals, the biographical dictionary of the Pandits who wrote Persian and Urdu literature, *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i Kashmir*, and interviews. Because many Pandits were public figures, official government publications (such as the Histories of Service, Civil Lists, Manuals of Titles, and newspapers) have been used extensively to confirm what unofficial sources revealed. It is fortunate that the Kashmiri Pandits have been such a highly literate community and that they wrote so extensively.

One can be disappointed by the lack of diaries and letters but surprised at the amount of information which can be obtained

from interviews. Events which occurred a century ago have retained their immediacy for many Pandits today. Very few, regrettably, know why or when their forefathers came to north India. And virtually none know what their family circumstances had been prior to migration from Kashmir.

As a cultural hybrid, Kashmiri Pandits were a community with fascinating complexities and depths of sophistication. They were also important in north India because they were in a position to play a positive role as a 'bridge' within Indian society. That the Kashmiri Pandits finally abdicated or were forced to abdicate this role as brokers had unfortunate social consequences within the subcontinent.

If there is a bias in this study, it arises from regret at this reversal. One assumption, or perhaps one prejudice, is that communalism has not been a healthy form of social conflict. 'Freedom of religion' may be a positive value, but assertion or imposition of religion upon others can be dangerous.

The central weakness in this analysis might lie in an absence of elaborate theoretical underpinnings. Rather than attempting to contribute to a debate over the epistemology and metaphysics of caste or the meanings and boundaries of subcaste, I have chosen to describe 'Pandits' in a more loose form. This I have done out of a sense that to present a neat definition would be dishonest. Those Kashmiri Pandits who are the subject of this thesis left their homeland at varying times in the past. They came to north India and formed marital ties with others who had migrated from Kashmir before them. They gradually forgot their Kashmiri language but clung to customs which they had brought from Kashmir. They lost their sense of identification or unity with those who had remained behind in Kashmir. They did this without substituting old for new bonds with local residents of their new domicile. The boundaries of their community as an effective social group had shades, not clear lines of demarcation. Their disinclination to bring wives from Kashmir itself was not absolute. Practices of adoption served to dilute boundaries further. Likewise, the lack of marriage ties between the *karkun* and *guru* sections of the Pandits was not total.

The difficulties of defining this group are not confined to the outside observer. Following the events of 1947, many Kashmiri

Pandits left Kashmir. Little intermarriage occurs between these more recent arrivals and those whose families have been in the cities of north India for generations. Many in both these groups think that marital connections should be encouraged. Others say that the differences between these two subcommunities are too great. Kashmiri Pandits who are still in Kashmir are now said to have virtually nothing in common with those who departed from Kashmir in earlier times.

Moreover, there is no single standard of religious orthodoxy. The behavioural code of Pandits is permissive but not absolutely so. There is, nevertheless, no common consensus on where to place limits. This is so partly because community *gurus* who preside over ritual observances have very little actual control. To be a Kashmiri Pandit means to inherit certain kinds of aspiration more than anything else.

The group with which the Kashmiri Pandits had the greatest affinity was the Kayasth. The two groups shared the same literate callings and Persianate heritage. It is true that the Pandits were accepted as Brahmans, while the Kayasths' claims for high rank were openly questioned. But this meant simply that the Kayasths were prone to a sense of insecurity not very different from that experienced by the Pandits, although its origins were not the same.

The Kayasths, as they emerge in the work of Lucy Carroll, displayed much the same sort of preoccupations and responses as the Kashmiri Pandits in north India. The Kayasth quest for reform, like that of the Pandits, was designed to create a sense of a community and community unity, and thereby overcome the sense of vulnerability and threat engendered by novel political and economic developments. And, as did the Pandits, the Kayasths resolved the conflicts inherent in a tradition newly seen as 'ambiguous' by asserting the 'Hindu' elements in their tradition.

Pandits seemed to embody all that was beautiful in Indo-Islamicate society and culture. My original purpose was to discover why Kashmiri Pandits were so receptive to this culture. How and why did they retain a commitment to this culture while other Hindus were moving away from it? But this stereotypical view of the Pandits was far from accurate. A change of focus soon evolved, with emphasis upon the process of change by which Kashmiri Pandits repudiated the synthetic elements in their

tradition. How some of the most profound cultural attributes of the Pandits were radically changed in the course of one century is the central concern of this thesis.

At its core, then, this study is concerned with the nature of cultural identity—with exactly how one defines oneself. This focus emerged after my reading the nineteenth century journals of the community. I was struck by the extent to which members of the community regarded identity as an important construct, with how elements of identity were subject to debate and suggestion. The Pandits asked themselves 'Who are we?' as much as they pondered what they should do about changes going on among them.

Community journals show how, in changing the elements of their identity, the Kashmiri Pandits were responding as much out of a sense of fear as out of a sense of reality, as much to perceived threats as to actual dangers. The acute insecurity of the Pandits was due, in part, to their minority status. An important purpose of this study, therefore, is to illustrate what it meant to be a minority. The Kashmiri Pandits always felt vulnerable and weak as a group which had destroyed past roots and was reluctant to grow new roots.

To compensate for their felt status as outsiders, Kashmiri Pandits seem always to have over-adapted to whatever happened to be their host environment. Regional differentiation came into conflict with the need of a small community for internal unity. The Kashmiris of Avadh, assimilated to the *nawabi* culture of Lucknow, increasingly diverged from the Pandits of the Panjab, whose styles were influenced by the less refined culture of the Lahore Darbar. This regional differentiation has served to dictate, at least in part, the organization of this study. That strict chronology which should perhaps be the organizing principle for any work of history has been qualified by the need, at least partially, to substitute geographic region as a basis for organization.

An important subtheme of this study, one which emerged from both interviews and the community journals, has involved the juxtapositon of 'representation' and 'reality'. 'Representation', as Hannah Pitkin has observed in *The Concept of Representation*, influences reality:

> Since human beings are not merely political animals but also language-using animals, their behavior is shaped by their ideas. What they do and

how they do it depends upon how they see themselves and their world, and this in turn depends upon the concepts through which they see.

The 'representation' of reality corresponds to what historians, among them Jan Vansina, have referred to as 'traditions' or 'testimonies', as opposed to history as it actually transpired. Such traditions, according to Vansina, are 'mirages of reality'; distortions which 'shed light on existing social and cultural backgrounds.' The manner in which history is recounted is altered to reflect contemporary cultural values. History is *made* exemplary. The presentation of their history by the Pandits, although written rather than oral, illustrates the manner in which a highly literate community reinterpreted its past to make that past accord more closely with present needs and changing cultural values.

The purpose of the Pandits in thus reworking their history was not only to present community ideals; it was also to assert identity. The act of formulating their history, therefore, should not be understood simply as the reflection of a social group whose boundaries and identity were already sharply demarcated. As Lucy Carroll has observed, 'Caste histories should be viewed in terms of their function in defining and creating a community.' The creation of a common past facilitates contemporary unity.

The past recalled by the Pandits thus differed substantially from the past which had actually occurred. The Kashmiri Pandits of the later nineteenth century were constantly re-examining their own history. Out of that process of re-examination, various reinterpretations emerged. These reinterpretations, frequently poles apart, illuminated the present more than the past, reflecting contemporary needs and values. Individuals like Tej Bahadur Sapru, who attempted to overcome the growing communal cleavage in India, strove to evoke the Pandits' historical role as having been creative and synthetic. Those who wished, instead, to strengthen the Kashmiris' credentials as Hindus preferred to emphasize the extent to which their history was a tale of martyrdom and persecution.

The first part of this study attempts to present a balanced and documented history of the Pandits in Kashmir. It juxtaposes hard data and known events with various versions of the legendary history of the community. The uses to which various reconstructed versions of historical tradition were put are an important part of

later sections of this analysis. At the end of the nineteenth century, Pandits began to view their identity as divided into elements which were Muslim and elements which were non-Muslim.

The final part of this study concerns an examination of the increasing discontinuity between the Pandits in their 'public' role and their private environment. This discontinuity is a familiar element in cultural change. Conflict between personal inclination and intellectual judgement is well-known to intellectual historians of nineteenth-century Asia. The figure who discovers that what to him had been the best and most familiar of all worlds is no longer a possible one is a figure frequently encountered by intellectual historians.

For the Kashmiri Pandits, the conflict was less between history and value than between history and necessity. To be vital, according to Joseph Levenson, identity must have real reference to one's objective situation, personal ideology must have objective significance. It must serve an adaptive or survival purpose. When it loses that purpose, it must be surrendered, despite the pain of that surrender. The Pandits' surrender of past beliefs and ways was made more difficult by the sense that what was necessary was not necessarily always worthwhile.

The Pandits, similar to some of the Chinese portrayed by Levenson, loved their world; not only because they inherited it, but because they thought it good. Yet they did not cling to their inheritance. On the contrary: the Kashmiris proved remarkably willing to jettison the tradition with which they had previously identified once the rationale for its original acceptance was gone.

This willingness to change was not, however, an entirely rational acknowledgement of the demands of reality. The Kashmiri Pandits were moved by the need for social acceptance and security. A sense of vulnerability rather than rationality lay behind an apparently rational and dispassionate willingness to change. The later nineteenth century gave rise to a transformation in the Pandits' personality that was not entirely an exercise in free choice.

The later years of the nineteenth century were years when many Pandits could no longer say what they thought or be what they wanted to be. These years saw an almost complete reversal in self-perception. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, religion had been a private affair. Characteristic 'public appearances' of Pandits would have been at *mushairas*. There, clad in *kurta* and

pajama, they would have recited Persian verses to patrons, most of whom would have happened to be Muslim. By the end of the time period covered by this history, 'public' and 'private' roles had been switched. Religious orthodoxy, in whatever forms, became a matter for public proclamation; and affinity with the culture of the Mughals was something to be held privately. Persian rather than Sanskrit had become the language of sentiment, and English, the language of utility.

In 1936 the community took a survey of its members. The largest group of Pandits was in Lahore, where there were approximately 200 families. Lucknow had only 150 families. Since independence, the geographic distribution of the community has been greatly altered. Pandits living in what became Pakistan are now in India. Pandits are still urban creatures; but they are more widely spread. Within cities there are changes also. Movements from confined ancestral quarters, such as Bazar Sita Ram and Kashmiri Muhalla, to dispersed new colonies continue. This shift is paralleled by a structural shift, from life in joint families to life in nuclear units.

Occupational differentiation has also increased. Fifty years ago, at least forty out of the two hundred entries on the Lahore community rolls were Pandits who worked in the railroad bureaucracy, particularly in the accounts department. Another thirty were identified as clerks, either in government or private service. Approximately a dozen were educationists and an equal number were businessmen. At least five individuals were *vakils*, *zamindars*, *gurus*, or post office employees, respectively. A handful were journalists, magistrates, policemen, or soldiers. As the 1936 survey indicated fathers and in-laws, it is possible for us to note the extent to which family connections determined occupational choices.

In Lucknow no comparable group held a foothold in any one governmental department. Some thirty of the approximately 150 heads of families were employed by government. The two next largest groups, with over twenty individuals in each, were either *zamindars* or legal professionals: *vakils*, advocates, and judges. These were not mutually exclusive categories. Members of a single family might be found in both groups, some as *zamindars* and others as *vakils*. Numbers of doctors, engineers, and businessmen were comparable in Lahore and Lucknow, with, in absolute terms, half a dozen to a dozen of each category.

Were a similar survey to be undertaken today, the pattern would be more diverse, but probably not *much* more diverse. The Kashmiri Pandits are loath to surrender callings that require education; but they are slowly moving from the humanities into the sciences. Clerks are more likely to be found on a private payroll than on government payrolls. Poorer members of the community are now more likely to hold low-paying jobs than to live off the largesse of their wealthier relatives. There are still numerous Kashmiri Pandits at higher echelons of government service; and sizeable groups still hold places in such traditional enclaves as the Allahabad High Court (where three are judges and many are lawyers). But Kashmiris do not expect that they will be able to continue to obtain or maintain themselves in such prestigious positions indefinitely. (This concern, of course, is hardly unique.)

The problems faced by Pandits have remained surprisingly unchanged during the past fifty years. Internally, marriage still occasions their greatest debates. As a small community, extensive inbreeding has occurred among the Kashmiris. There are tales of families with abnormally high rates of leukemia or madness or other diseases that are obviously hereditary. Most Pandits agree that they are too inbred; but no consensus emerges on how to define the eligible marriage pool. The desire to retain identity as a Kashmiri Pandit, to preserve the biological links with past generations, is strong; but so is the realization that perhaps new blood would strengthen the community. The debate about marriage is essentially a debate about the future of the community and how best to preserve its existence. Can one remain a Pandit if a spouse or parent is not a Pandit?

Economic and occupational questions generate the greatest concern among the Pandits. Quotas and protective discrimination mean that Pandits can score very well in official examinations and yet not obtain government positions because they do not belong to the so-called backward groups. A century ago, community elders warned of dire consequences if the Pandits failed to dedicate themselves to passing competitive exams. Now the community does not worry about lack of education so much as over-education. The Kashmiris continue to aspire to *naukeri* ('service'), but the chances of such aspirations being fulfilled diminish.

Business is still a possibility. But Kashmiris contemplate that

possibility only with reluctance. Community suspicions of merchant status and disinclination to trade have not significantly subsided. 'We only worship Saraswati (the Goddess of Wisdom), not Lakshmi (Goddess of Wealth),' they say. This attitude is explained as an outgrowth of a continuing self-perception among Pandits of being vulnerable and too weak to afford taking risks. Kashmiri Pandits have never contemplated the future with confidence. Nor do they now.

The traditional commitment of the community to education has been extended to its female children. Community journals once lamented the lack of education among Pandit women. But this has not been a problem for so many years that many in the community have forgotten that it ever was a problem. Some even assert that Kashmiri society is almost matriarchal. The extent to which Kashmiri women dominate their husbands or have more say in the Pandit community must surely make it one of the most fortunate communities in India. Progress has been made on the curtailment of ritual spending (much to the dismay of the *gurus*). This curtailment has been accomplished with such confidence that it may be difficult for many to remember that this too was once a problem. Those who wrote about the 'dowry problem' a century ago would be astonished to learn what their descendants say: that their community has never 'sold their daughters the way Kayasths or Panjabis do.

Concern over the curtailing of extravagance has led indirectly to reduced community solidarity. Few Kashmiris would think of inviting all local members of the community to a wedding today. Two generations ago, Kashmiri Pandits would have extended economic opportunities to their less prosperous brethren. One generation ago, hospitality rather than help would have been proferred. Now, even this is no longer automatically forthcoming.

Pandits continue to reflect strong trends prevailing in their host environment. As Urdu writing disappeared from street signs in Delhi, so also have Islamicized elements receded from customary observances of the community. Pandits have retained some of the customs which they acquired from long association with United Provinces Muslims. As part of a Pandit wedding, Kashmiri brides are still decorated with flower jewellery, in a ceremony known as

*phulon ke gehena*—a custom which is as practical as it is beautiful. But today's Kashmiri children no longer take part in the *tazia* processions on Muharram (in Lucknow) as their parents once did. In the previous generation, few Pandits celebrated Holi as they now do. New Year celebrations also are becoming more 'Hinduized'.

And perhaps the most drastic change produced in the last fifty years has been an almost total movement away from Urdu. Few young Kashmiris can read what their grandfathers wrote—in the script in which it was inscribed. This cultural shift has had profound political implications.

In some ways the almost fifty years following Independence have been deceptive. In retrospect, it would seem as if Jawaharlal Nehru presided over an ending rather than a beginning. Nehru was impatient with problems of communal relations. His conviction that social relations were grounded in economic realities was so strong that it blinded him to the fact that others did not share this view. Nevertheless, Nehru personified, even if he did not always actively pursue, a synthesis achieved by Hindus and Muslims. Women of Kamala Nehru's generation did not share in their fathers' and husbands' cultural worlds. They stood at a distance from the Mughal heritage. Theirs was not the language of high culture but the vernacular of simple family life. When women received education in past generations, it was religious rather than intellectual. If they were taught to write, it was in the Nagri script instead of the Persian. When they were able to recite, it was *bhajans* rather than *ghazals* which they sang.

Many of the Kashmiri Pandits who continue to harbour a broad, secular vision find themselves increasingly isolated. They still exercise power: but what they now stand for is different.

The future will probably find the Kashmiri Pandits even more divided. This division will not be between those who are committed to the past and those who are not, but between those who fervently embrace a particular religious identity and those who are indifferent to it, as also their particular identity as Kashmiri Pandits. The manner in which individuals will define themselves will include less and less of those elements from their heritage which were considered so essential by their grandparents. Whether this will be a good or bad development depends upon other choices the Pandits make, and the degree of confidence with which those choices are made.

# Glossary

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| *Amla* | A subordinate official. |
| *Anjuman* | An association. |
| *Badmash* | Troublemaker. (Usually implies lower class.) |
| *Bakshi* | Paymaster. |
| *Bhajan* | A Hindu devotional song. |
| *Bhat* | Alternative term for a Pandit. |
| *Buzurg* | Elder. |
| *Chakladar* | A subordinate revenue official under the Nawabi. |
| *Darbar* | Public court assembly. |
| *Diwan* | Revenue official; later, an honorific title. |
| *Farqa* | Group. |
| *Ghazal* | A form of poetry in rhyming couplets. |
| *Gotra* | An exogamous group descended from a common ancestor and living within an endogamous group. |
| *Gentoo* | Non-Muslim. |
| *Guru* | A section of the Kashmiri Pandits in charge of ritual practices. |
| *Hookah* | Water pipe. |
| *Ijara* | Lease of land in exchange for a fixed amount of revenue. |
| *Izzat* | Honour. |
| *Jagir right* | The right to collect state revenue. |
| *Jajmani* | Client-patron hereditary relationship. |
| *Jotishi* | Astrologer. |
| *Karkun* | The section of the Kashmiri Pandits in secular occupations. |
| *Kotwal* | The chief police officer of a city. |
| *Kurta* | A flowing shirt. |
| *Madrasa* | A secondary school communicating an Islamicate education. |
| *Maktab* | A school in which Arabic is taught, usually to enable a student to read the Quran. |

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| *Masnavi* | A form of poetry; usually epic or commemorative. |
| *Mlechcha* | A Hindu term for non-Hindus; derogatory connotations. |
| *Muharrir* | A clerk. |
| *Mufussil* | Countryside. |
| *Muhalla* | A neighbourhood of a town. |
| *Munsif* | The lowest level of judgeship under the Raj. |
| *Mushaira* | A gathering at which poetry is recited. |
| *Nazm* | A form of poetry which became the vehicle for political expression in the nineteenth century. |
| *Nautch* | A form of entertainment with dancing girls. |
| *Nawab* | A title assumed by governors of provinces such as Avadh and Hyderabad in late Mughal times. |
| *Panda* | The individual in charge of the records at Hindu sacred places. |
| *Peshkar* | Subordinate court official. |
| *Prayshchit* | Hindu penance ritual. |
| *Qanungo* | Revenue clerk. |
| *Rais* | An Indian with a respectable position in local society under the Raj. |
| *Sadr amin* | Subordinate magistrate under company jurisdiction. |
| *Sanatan dharm* | The orthodox religious observances of Hindus. |
| *Subedar* | In charge of a province. |
| *Tahsildar* | The officer in charge of a revenue subdivision under the Raj. |
| *Takhallus* | Pen name used by Persian and Urdu poets. |
| *Taluqdari* | Originally, the right to collect revenue; after 1858, proprietary right over land. |
| *Tazkira* | Biographical dictionary. |
| *Vakil* | Pleader; ambassador. |
| *Vilayati* | Foreign. |
| *Zamindar* | Holder of right of property in land. |

CHAPTER I

# Pre-Muslim Kashmir

Kashmiri Pandit subscribers to the community magazine *Safir-i-Kashmir*, an Urdu monthly from Muradabad, were greeted by an article which appeared in the autumn of 1891. Its author was B.M. Dattatreya (b. 1866), one of the magazine's most prolific contributors and a scion of an old Delhi Kashmiri Pandit family. The article is interesting less for the information it conveys about the community's past than for its expression of the current sentiments of the Kashmiri Brahman community of north India at the end of the nineteenth century.

The Kashmiri Pandits eyed the world at this time with something less than optimism and confidence. Changes had resulted in greater opportunities for education and administrative employment, the traditional sphere of the Pandits. Simultaneously, however, widened recruitment into bureaucracy threatened the access of the traditional service castes to government positions. Uncertainty and fear characterized the Kashmiri response to these changes. The recognition that past solutions were inadequate to present conditions stimulated a thorough and painful re-examination of the Kashmiri inheritance, in an attempt to discover new answers while maintaining some semblance of continuity in their lives; to change patterns without a loss of identity.

Re-evaluation of the past led to a certain distortion. The Kashmiris remembered a past that was substantially different from that experienced by their forefathers. In his article, Dattatreya presented a re-statement of the history of the Kashmiri Pandit community of north India in which the past was made to appear both simpler and infinitely preferable to the present. The history of the Pandit community, according to Dattatreya, was one of continuous decline, which culminated finally in the current situation of the Kashmiri Brahmans, a community with neither an identity nor a future.

In Dattatreya's account, Kashmir represented the golden age, Kashmir was compared with Paradise, and the Pandits' departure comparable to Adam's leaving the Garden of Eden. The Pandits' migrations to the plains were interpreted in almost apocryphal terms as their downfall, subsequent to which the community had become divided and demoralized.[1]

Originally, Dattatreya maintained, the Pandits did very well in the plains and became very wealthy. When they first arrived in Hindusthan, according to the author, they 'were dazzled by the gold and the silver.' Riches, however, made them self-centered and superior: 'They spat on those who remained in Kashmir and formed a separate sect.'[2] Each group of Pandits adopted the customs of their new home in the plains, thus diverging from each other as well as from the Brahmans of Kashmir.

'We do not have a nationality,' Dattatreya lamented, 'we are Kashmiri in name only.'[3] In other articles, Dattatreya continually stressed the rootlessness of the Pandits and the need to re-connect with their Kashmiri origins.

Kashmir as it was evoked and invoked in the pages of the community magazine was not always portrayed in such idyllic terms: other Pandits wrote of life in Kashmir as an uninterrupted cycle of natural disaster and official persecution. In these other accounts, migration appeared a vindication of Pàndit identity rather than the beginning of communal decline.

The actual history of the Pandit community of Kashmir is neither a tale of paradise lost, nor of relentless oppression. Its beginnings are shrouded more in legendary claims than certainty; accounts reveal more of aspiration than of reality. The early history of the Kashmiri Brahmans as they themselves have remembered and recorded it illustrates Jan Vansina's description of testimony as a mirage of reality, distorted by the defence of private interests and influenced by changing cultural values. Tradition, Vansina writes, is adapted to current concepts, it exists only because it serves society. The purpose of tradition is to facilitate adaptation to one's social environment.[4] As the Kashmiris' social environment changed in the later part of the nineteenth century, their

[1]Brij Mohan Dattatreya, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Oct.-Nov. 1891).
[2]Ibid. [3]Ibid.
[4]Vansina, *Oral Tradition*, p. 78.

tradition too was altered, and it is this process which was at work in the monthly issues of the community magazine.

Geographers stress the physical isolation of Kashmir. It has been described as a 'half closed eco-system, opening up slowly in space and across time.'[5] The isolation of Kashmir was always qualified, however. Trade links connected Kashmir with central Asia and the subcontinent. Conquest further breached the self-containment of the area. Shrines such as Amarnath drew pilgrims to Kashmir as well.

Kashmir was linked to the subcontinent by three routes, historically. During the Mughal period, the path over the Pir Panjal, which connected Srinagar with the Punjab via Shubiyon, Bhimbar, and Gujrat was the most popular. Akbar traversed this route three times: during the regime of Shah Jahan, imperial serais were constructed by the governor, Ali Mardan Khan. The Baramulla route which followed the Jhelum and led to Peshawar and Rawalpindi bore most travellers in the Pathan period and was the path taken by Baron Hügel in 1835. By the later nineteenth century the Banihal route via Jammu replaced both the Pir Panjal and the Baramulla as the major artery for traffic between the valley and India. As Drew described it, even at this date the journey was not an easy one. 'The path itself is not good; nor the country it goes over favourable to communication; there are five distinct ridges of hills to be crossed, besides many ups and downs over spurs that cause almost as much labour as do the passes.'[6]

Kashmir fits into many historians' categories. Hermann Goetz described Kashmir as both highway and refuge area. It provided the cultural link connecting Iran and central Asia, while its isolation made it receptive to cultural traditions that had been defeated elsewhere.[7] Moreover Kashmir fits B.S. Cohn's definition of a 'shatter zone' because it is the 'traditional region through which large numbers of people passed, either in military or peaceful

[5]Moonis Raza, Aijazuddin Ahmad and Ali Muhammad, *The Valley of Kashmir, a Geographical Interpretation* (New Delhi, 1978), p. ix.

[6]F. Drew, *Jamoo and Kashmir Territories: A Geographical Account* (reprint Delhi, 1971), p. 140.

[7]Hermann Goetz, *Studies in the History and Art of Kashmir and the Indian Himalayas* (Wiesbaden, 1969).

invasion.'[8] It is however more unified in its socio-cultural traditions than Cohn argues a shatter zone should be. It also corresponds to Cohn's definition of a cul-de-sac, or a region of relative isolation. 'These are regions,'[9] Cohn explains, 'which because of their geographic, ecological characteristics, which prevent easy access, have tended to be bypassed.[9]

Flood and famine are recurring features in any physical history of the region.[10] Lawrence indicated the scope of these disasters when he estimated that in the famine of 1831 the population of the valley was reduced from 800,000 to 200,000.[11] According to Lawrence, another famine, this in 1878, took the lives of three-fifths of the population.[12]

Lawrence referred repeatedlv to the way the interests of villagers were sacrificed to those of the residents of Srinagar and there is little evidence linking the Pandits' departure with specific seasons of scarcity. Lawrence observed of 1878, 'It is a notorious fact that the Hindus of Kashmir did not suffer heavily. The Mussulmans attribute the immunity of the Pandits to the fact they were a privileged class, whose official power enabled them to seize all available grain.'[13]

Punjab District Gazetteers referred to the appearance of Kashmiris in the Punjab during these hard times, but these were Kashmiri Muslims. Neither Kaul nor Kilam dwelt on famines as a significant factor in the migration of Kashmiri Brahmans,[14] preferring to attribute departure to heroic flight or imperial summons, while descendants of migrants view famine as a minor element, one of many considerations making life in the plains more attractive and safe.

[8]B.S. Cohn, 'Regions Subjective and Objective in South Asian History', *Regions and Regionalism in South Asia* (Durham, Duke University Monographs, 1900), p. 12.

[9]Ibid., p. 14.

[10]Jonaraja, *Rajatarangini*, trans. J.C. Dutt (Calcutta, 1898), p. 14. The Mughal historians referred to famines.

[11]Walter Lawrence, *The Valley of Kashmir* (Srinagar, 1895), p. 213.

[12]Ibid. 'Many attempted to escape to the Punjab but at the barriers troops were stationed to prevent the migration of the people and harrowing tales are told of fathers of families getting past the barrier by bribing the guardians of the passes while the wives and children were left to die in Kashmir.' Ibid., p. 215.

[13]Ibid., p. 214.

[14]Anand Kaul, *The Kashmiri Pandit* (Calcutta, 1924), and J.L. Kilam, *History of the Kashmiri Pandit* (Srinagar, 1955).

No historical work has dealt in satisfactory fashion with the origins of the Kashmiri Pandits. Works written by Kashmiri Brahmans, such as those of Kaul and Kilam[15] discuss the origins of the community in legendary terms. The amateur English ethnologists of the nineteenth century base their conclusions on facile physiognomical observations. Both these sources agree both on the antiquity of the community and its Aryan nature. In the words of Sherring, 'That Kashmir is one of the primitive homes of the Brahmans in India is beyond dispute.'[16] George Campbell portrayed the Kashmiris as 'quite High Aryan in the type of their features, very fair and handsome with high chiselled features and no trace of intermixture of the blood with any lower race.'[18] Pecock speculated on the possible racial links between the Kashmiris and the Greeks and Persians, links which could have been established at the time of Alexander the Great.[18]

There is some debate concerning the direction from which the Kashmiris came into Kashmir. Colebrooke stated that they were descendants of incoming Kanyakubjas.[19] Sherring dismissed the theory of his Banarsi informants that they were related to the Kanoujiya Brahmans.[20] Kaul stated flatly, 'As regards the origins of the Kashmiri Brahmans, it is certain that it was a colony of Aryan immigrants from Central Asia.'[21] More contemporary Pandits, such as Kilam and Madan, do not speculate on the subject.[22]

Generally, studies of the community written by the Pandits themselves were more concerned to demonstrate status than to establish fact. The relative fairness of the Kashmiris which led Europeans to associate the Kashmiris with some sort of pure-blooded Aryan ideal was soon adopted by the Kashmiris and

[15]Ibid.

[16]M.A. Sherring, *Hindu Castes and Tribes as Represented in Benares* (London, 1872), p. 109.

[17]George Campbell, 'The Ethnology of India', *JASB*, Pt. II (1866), p. 57.

[18]Pocock, quoted in Anand Kaul, *The Kashmiri Pandit*, p. 21.

[19]H.T. Colebrooke, 'On the Religious Ceremonies of the Hindus, Especially the Brahmins', *Asiatic Researches*, Vol. 7 (1803), p. 226.

[20]Sherring, *Hindu Castes and Tribes*, p. 110.

[21]Kaul, *The Kashmiri Pandit*, p. 18.

[22]T.N. Madan, *Family and Kinship, a Study of the Pandits of Rural Kashmir* (Bombay, 1965); Kilam, *History of the Kashmiri Pandit*.

incorporated into their writings. Perhaps fair skin and Aryan descent were impressive enough to compensate for non-vegetarianism and close association with Muslims; factors that detracted from the Pandits' status in the later years of the nineteenth century. Thus Har Gopal Kaul, writing in 1883, referred to his community as the first of the Aryans, the most ancient and purest of blood, in a description he superimposed upon traditional accounts of the Pandits' descent from Kashyap Rishi.[23]

This Kashyap Rishi is, according to Campbell, 'still recognized by the Brahmins and Hindus as the first of the seven rishis and even far away down on the west coast of India, the Brahmins in general still trace their descent to Kashyap.'[24]Campbell believed that, given the apparent antiquity of Brahmanical settlement in Kashmir, 'It is probable that [Indian Brahmans] have sprung from and (in their sense) improved upon the Kashmiris.'[25]

Antiquity was made the basis for justifying those Kashmiri Brahmanical practices which diverged from the orthodox standard. To trace one's ancestry to ancient times was to be associated with *krta yuga*, and therefore, to be in propinquity with the gods. As Kashmiri ritual practice is older, the Pandits claimed, it must accord more closely with correct practice.

The Nilamata Purana, which incorporated an account of the descent of the Kashmiri Brahmans from Kashyap Rishi, is the standard religious text of the Pandits. The Nila of the title refers to the snake deity Nila who 'took the Brahmin [Kashyap] to his home, worshipped him, fed him and told him the practices to be followed for living in Kashmir.'[26] The Purana reflected the synthesis of the regional tradition of Kashmir with the great tradition of India, the assimilation of the worship of the Brahmanical gods with the pre-Vedic snake cult. In spite of the departures necessitated by pacifying the *nagas*, Kashmir, as it was portrayed in the Purana, was associated both with sanctity and Brahmanical orthodoxy, and was 'inhabited by the people who perform sacrifices and are engaged in self-study and contemplation: virtuous ascetics well-versed in the Vedas; by highly prosperous Kshatriyas

[23]Har Gopal Kaul, *Guldasta-i-Kashmir* (Lahore, 1883), p. 3.
[24]Campbell, 'Ethnology,' p. 58. [25]Ibid.
[26]*Nilamata Purana*, trans. Ved Kumari Ghai (Srinagar, 1973), p. 97 (lines 376–7).

adept in (the use of) arms and weapons, by Vaishyas (earning) the means of livelihood, and by Sudras serving the twice born.'[27]

The only source for the pre-Islamic history of Kashmir is Kalhana's twelfth-century Sanskrit chronicle, the *Rajatarangini*. This period need not be given extensive treatment here. It is relevant only to the extent that it illuminates the elements from which the Kashmiri Pandits of the plains have remembered or reconstructed their tradition.

Brahmans were alluded to frequently in the pages of the *Rajatarangini*. Their earliest appearance was as recipients of *agraharas* from the first kings of Kashmir. Brahmanical values infused the history. By these standards, one of the more exemplary rulers was Jalauka, allegedly the son of Ashoka. 'Having conquered the earth including Kanyakubja and other [countries] he settled from that region [i.e. Aryavarta], people of all four castes in his own land and particularly righteous men acquainted with legal procedure.'[28] This reference to the immigration from Kanyakubja is the first mention of immigration into the valley and is perhaps the source of Colebrooke's statement that Kashmiris were descended from Kanyakubja Brahmans.

Kalhana linked beneficent monarchs with the importation of Aryavarta Brahmans. The 'evil-minded' Hun king, Mihirakula was, however, unable to obtain any. Only 'Brahmins from Gandhara, resembling himself in their habits and verily themselves the lowest of the twice born accepted agraharas from him.'[29]

The Brahmans of the *Rajatarangini* can be distinguished according to their functions in the sacred, scholarly, and secular realms. A large section of Brahmans served as officials. Their role corresponded with that of the Brahmans who, in the Sultanate period, were known as the *karkuns*. Kalhana referred to them as Kayasths; a functional term rather than a sociological one. The image of the Kayasth was not a particularly flattering one; the author of the *Rajatarangini* frequently commented on the rapacity and ingratitude of the Kayasths. 'The fishes of the sea and kings are alike in this: the former thinks the cloud liberal when it sends

[27] *Nilamata Purana*, pp. 4–5.
[28] *Kalhana's Rajatarangini*, trans. M.A. Stein (London, 1900), Book 1, p. 22.
[29] Ibid., Book 1, p. 46.

down drops from their own water which had been drawn up. The latter too believe inwardly in the faithful services of the wicked tribe of officials when it gives up a few trifles after looting everything.'[30]

In addition to providing the only information about the Brahmans of pre-Sultanate Kashmir, Kalhana also illuminated the iconoclastic behaviour of the pre-Muslim rulers of Kashmir. While it is generally believed that only Muslims destroyed Hindu idols and plundered temples, several of the Hindu kings of Kashmir, according to Kalhana's text, acted in similar fashion. Harsa (1069–1101), inspired by the unexpected discovery of a silver idol in a deserted temple, found plunder of the *mandirs* a particularly convenient way to raise revenue. The king 'reflected upon what riches there might be in other wealthy temples when there was such wealth in this deserted shrine . . .Then the greedy king plundered from all the temples the wonderful treasure which former kings had bestowed there . . . .'[31] From this activity, Harsa turned to the persecution of the Brahmans, killing many and forcing others to flee or hide. 'Some ate meat in the lands of the mlechchas while others lingered on by working water wheels.'[32]

Instances of royal persecution and Brahmanical flight[33] during the pre-Sultanate period have not imposed themselves strongly upon the collective memory of the Kashmiri Pandit community. The pre-Muslim period of Kashmir's history is remembered, instead, as a golden age, contrasting sharply with the subsequent centuries of Muslim rule. In fact, episodes of oppression and migration were not confined to the Islamic period. Jonaraja's account of the worst excesses of the most zealous Muslim ruler was merely an echo of Kalhana's description of Harsa, 'a demon descended to destroy this land hallowed by gods, tirthas, and rishis.'[34]

[30]Ibid., p. 177. See also p. 208.
[31]Ibid., Book II, p. 352.
[32]Ibid., Book VII, p. 364.
[33]Ibid., Book I, p. 177.
[34]Ibid., Book II, p. 364.

CHAPTER II

# Sultanate Kashmir

By the thirteenth century, Kashmir had become so weakened by internal strife that Mongol invaders met virtually no resistance. In reviewing this period, Aziz Ahmad writes:

> These Mongol invasions created a vacuum in population and as probably the elite suffered most, they . . . left power vacuums in which new factions could gain a foothold. All these factors created . . . a more eclectic faction under the leadership of a Muslim adventurer, either a local convert or descendant of an earlier immigrant of few generations, Shah Mir, the most shrewd of power faction leaders, who declared himself ultimately the first Muslim Sultan of Kashmir.[1]

Although Kosambi maintained 'the ground had long been prepared by the influx of foreign adventurers in royal service,[2] there was nothing inevitable about the establishment of Muslim rule in Kashmir. Nor should it be understood as a great departure.

Pandit accounts of the Islamic period of Kashmir's history tend to be both monodimensional and inconsistent. The Muslim period of Kashmir's history has been greatly affected by contemporary partisan concerns. As such it has come to be viewed in simplistic terms and made either exemplary or deplorable. Those who made harmonious communal relations a positive value tended to glorify the sultanate period, those who did not chose instead to denigrate this time. The fact that the centuries of Sultanate rule contained both positive and negative elements meant that the historical legacy bequeathed to the Pandits has been an ambiguous one. The Sultanate years have left the Kashmiri Pandits with such a flexible historical experience they have been able to use it to illustrate many varying and even contradictory points of view.

[1]Aziz Ahmad, 'Conversion to Islam in the Valley of Kashmir', *CAJ*, Vol. 23, nos. 1-2 (1979), p. 5.

[2]D.D. Kosambi, 'Origins of Feudalism in Kashmir', *J.B.B.R.A.S.* (1965), p. 119.

As Aziz Ahmad has indicated, Kashmir at the beginning of the fourteenth century was in a state of disorder. Political authority was challenged both from within and from without, and religion was incapable of providing meaningful social integration. 'Saivite Brahmanism of Kashmir was elitist, exclusive, apolitical....'[3]

The most devastating of numerous raids seems to have been launched towards the end of the reign of Suhadeva (1301–21) by one Dalacha, believed to have been a vassal of the Chaghtay Mongol khanate.[4] Relying on community legends, Anand Kaul wrote, 'During his depredations, which lasted eight months, he converted the people forcibly to Islam. Thereafter, he left for his native land, taking 50,000 Brahmins as slaves. While crossing the Devasar Pass, a snow-storm occurred in which he together with his troops and the Brahmin slaves perished. This place is called 'Bata Gajan' meaning the Brahmin's death oven.[5]

In 1321 a Ladakhi Buddhist, Rinchana, secured what was left of the rulership of Kashmir. From Jonaraja, we learn that following his conquest of Kashmir, Rinchana approached the Brahman Devaswami and asked him 'to initiate him in the mantras of Siva but as Rinchana was a 'Bhoota', Devaswami refused, fearing the king unworthy.'[6] According to the *Baharistan-i-Shahi*, Rinchana was determined to become a convert either to Saivism or to Islam and decided to settle the issue by means of a sight oracle. The next morning he is alleged to have seen a darvish and thus became a Muslim.[7] Scholars attribute this act either to personal quest (as does Sufi)[8] or political expediency. Kaul asserted that 'in the absence of co-operation from Hindus, the support for his newly acquired kingdom could only be had from the Muslim colony in Kashmir,'[9] a conclusion with which Kapur and Aziz Ahmad concur.[10] Following his conversion, Rinchana honoured the darvish, Bulbul Shah, by establishing a *khanquah* known as Bulbul Langer

[3]Aziz Ahmad, 'Conversion to Islam', p. 5. [4]Ibid., p. 4.

[5]Kaul, *The Kashmiri Pandit*, p. 44.

[6]Jonaraja, *Rajatarangini*, trans. J.C. Dutt as *Kings of Kashmir including the works of Jonaraja, Srivasa, Sukha and Prajabhatta* (Calcutta, 1879–90).

[7]Quoted in Jonaraja's *Rajatarangini*, ed. Sri Kanth Kaul (Hoshiarpur, 1966), p. 72.

[8]G.M. Sufi, *Islamic Culture in Kashmir* (New Delhi, 1979) pp. 34–5.

[9]Kaul, *The Kashmiri Pandit*, pp. 72–3.

[10]M.L. Kapur, *Studies in the History and Culture of Kashmir* (Jammu, 1976), p. 172, and Ahmad, 'Conversion to Islam', p. 8.

on the river. It was to be the first of many Islamic edifices constructed upon the landscape of Kashmir.

'After Rinchana,' wrote Muhammad Azim, 'first the leaders and then the people got converted to Islam.'[11] In the early years, conversion to Islam was a pacific, gradual and partial process. It apparently was conducted at both elitist and mass levels. Contemporary chroniclers make no mention of either forcible conversion or of rigorous application of Islamic orthodox law. Continuity rather than innovation marked the policy of the first sultans.[12]

From the time of Qutb-ud-din (1373–89), however, differences between non-Muslim and Muslim religious identities and the divergences between the Islam of the countryside and the Islam of the capital became marked. This was largely due to the influx of Muslims from west and central Asia in search of refuge from the Chagtay Mongols under Timur. For them the presence of an Islamic monarch in Kashmir served as a magnet.

The arrival of the Saiyids had a twofold impact upon Kashmiri society. The pace of conversion was accelerated and the commitment to Islam of those who had previously converted deepened. Popular forms of Islam as propagated by the Sufis became confined to the countryside. In the capital, the folk religion was supplemented and supplanted by the diffusion of the great tradition.

The most influential of the Saiyids was Saiyid Ali Hamdani.[13] Lawrence credited Saiyid Ali with 'practically establish(ing) Islam in the valley.'[14] Sufi asserts that the conversion of the valley to Islam was at least furthered by his influence.[15]

According to his biographer, Saiyid Ali Hamdani made three appearances in Kashmir; in 1372, in 1379, and finally, in 1383.[16] In *Baharistan i Shahi* it is said that the Saiyid departed from Kashmir the first time after he found himself unable to convince the Sultan of the need to enforce the Shariat more strictly.[17] On his return to

[11]Muhammad Azim, *Waqiat-i-Kashmir*, trans. Munshi Ashraf Ali from Persian into Urdu (Delhi, Delhi Vernacular Society, 1845), p. 82.

[12]Kosambi, 'Feudalism in Kashmir,' p. 119.

[13]Muhammad Azim, *Waqiat*, p.9; Har Gopal Kaul, *Guldasta-i-Kashmir*, p.104.

[14]Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 292. [15]Sufi, *Islamic Culture*, p. 37.

[16]A.A. Hekmat, 'Les Voyages d'un Mystique Persan de Hamdan au Kashmir', *Journal Asiatique*, Vol. 204 (1952), pp. 61–2.

[17]Quoted in Kapur, *Studies*, pp. 173–4.

Kashmir, he apparently met a more friendly reception from the ruler. 'The sultan listened intently to the Pir,' Muhammad Azim further noted. 'At this time [because] the *Shariat* was not known [in Kashmir] it was possible to have two wives who were sisters. After listening to the Pir, the King gave up one wife.'[18] Furthermore, the King wore Hindu clothes. As a result of the Saiyid's importuning, henceforth, Hindu and Muslim clothing became different in Kashmir. Aziz Ahmad describes the Saiyid as a 'champion of Muslim elitism in a composite society.'[19] Presumably, therefore, the Saiyid's presence increased pressure on members of the non-Muslim ruling elite: voluntary conversion would undoubtedly have brought significant material rewards.[20]

If Hamdani represented greater Islamic orthodoxy in the city, he also came to represent an alternative religious tradition outside it, a tradition which stressed syncretism. The Shah Hamdan mosque in Srinagar was built on the foundations of a Hindu temple—but in the countryside the difference between the two cultures or religious presences remained unclear.

English observers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in Kashmir seem to have been struck by the lack of difference between Hindu and Muslim places of worship and worshippers. They found shared popular religious tradition especially in the countryside. Thus in Walter we read, 'Many of the Hindu sacred places have passed over into Mohammadan hands with a scarcely perceptible change of traditional significance.'[21] Lawrence also alluded to the 'delightful tolerance' which exists between followers of the two religions, attributing it 'chiefly to the fact that the Kashmiri Mussalmans never really gave up the Hindu religion.'[22] According to Lawrence and Knight, the mutual tolerance between Hindu and Muslim was founded upon the same laxity for which Hamdani assailed the Sultan. 'I do not base my ideas as to the laxness of Kashmiris in religious duties merely on my own observations,' asseverated Lawrence, 'Holy men of Arabia have spoken to me with contempt of the feeble

[18]Muhammad Azim, *Waqiat*, p. 98.

[19]Aziz Ahmad, 'Conversion to Islam'.

[20]Had Hindus been *forced* to convert, it seems probable that Jonaraja would have mentioned it.

[21]Walter, 'Islam in Kashmir', *Muslim World* (1914), p. 349.

[22]Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 286.

flame of Islam which burns in Kashmir and the local mullas talk with indignation of the apathy of the people.'[23]

In Sufi's opinion, this 'widespread peaceful penetration (of Islam) was due primarily to the piety, purity, and simplicity of the Rishis and saints.'[24] These rishis conformed to Hindu ideals of simplicity and austerity and made Islam appear only a minor departure from the previous belief system of converts. Parmu suggested that the Islam the rishis personified was a tolerable alternative to a Hindu, and far more attractive than the orthodox variety of Islam; the very label, in fact, was Sanskrit and meant 'seer'.[25]

Sheikh Nuruddin or Nand Rishi (1377–1438) who is considered the founder of the Rishi order (to the extent one exists), combined in his person elements of both Islamic and non-Islamic religion. His hagiographers make the Sheikh into a sort of composite figure. His father was actually a converted Rajput, and his antecedents, according to Simon Digby, reflect a transition from the Saivite ascetic style to that of the Sufi pir.[26] In one tale, for example, it is said that when a baby, Nuruddin refused to take his mother's milk and would drink only from Lalla Deb, the Kashmiri panditani mystic.[27] Moreover, Nuruddin gave up practices considered objectionable to non-Muslims, such as the consumption of onions, thereby appealing to Hindus.[28]

This synthesis of Muslim and non-Muslim practice on a popular level was found in much of India, but not to the extent it prevailed in Kashmir. It was an important part of the heritage of the Kashmiri Pandits. However, this element of the Pandits' tradition was later repudiated by many in the community. Thus, while Lawrence and Knight were extolling the harmonious relations between the two communities of Kashmir, harbingers of religious revivalism, such as Har Gopal Kaul, were already repudiating peaceful co-existence, claiming that the proximity of *mandirs* and *masjids* was less a matter of harmony than convenience—Hindu

[23]Ibid. See also F. Knight, *Where Three Empires Meet* (London, 1895), p. 77.
[24]Sufi, *Islamic Culture*, p. 47.
[25]R.K. Parmu, *History of Muslim Rule in Kashmir* (Delhi, 1969), p. 432.
[26]Interview with Simon Digby, London, February 1980.
[27]Sufi, *Islamic Culture*, p. 41.
[28]G.L. Tikku, 'Mysticism in Kashmir in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Century', *Muslim World*, L III, No. 3 (July, 1963), p. 230.

converts could slip into a *mandir* more discreetly this way; and in the twentieth century, Kashmiri Pandits began to formally institute claims demanding that *masjids* which were originally *mandirs* be returned to them.[29] The Shah Hamdani Masjid, it was asserted, had formerly been a Kali Mandir, and must become so again. Thus the Saiyid who was portrayed as a folk saint of both communities was made, once again, a symbol of orthodox Islamic oppression.

Acknowledging the degree to which present concerns have shaped historical perception, Sufi noted, 'Anyone who visits old or ruined temples anywhere in India is told by the guide or the priests that the idols therein were broken by Aurangzeb, similarly anyone who visits such places up the Jhelum is summarily informed that the havoc to the gods was wrought by Sikander.'[30]

The Sikander Sufi referred to was Sultan Sikander (1389–1413). Sikander is remembered as 'buth-shikan'—the destroyer of idols. Although the forcible imposition of Islam with which he is associated was characteristic of only a brief period of Kashmir's history, to many Pandits he has come to symbolize it and the force and tyranny with which his regime is linked have been generalized to the history of the entire Sultanate period. The reign of Sikander is therefore a crucial period in the history and mythology of the Kashmiri Brahmans; not only for what actually transpired, but for what is 'remembered'. Memories of forced conversion, perilous flight and long exile have etched themselves on the collective consciousness of the community and have exercised influence on choices the Pandits were asked to make in later years.

Three primary sources provide information concerning Sikander. These are the *Rajatarangini* of Jonaraja, Nizamuddin Ahmad's *Tarikh-i-Akbarat* and Ferishta. According to the last authority, Sikander issued orders that only Muslims would be allowed to reside in Kashmir and 'required that no man would wear the mark on his forehead or any woman be permitted to burn with her husband's corpse. Lastly he insisted on all the gold and silver images being broken and melted down and the metal coined into money.'[31] As for the Brahmans, 'Many, rather than abandon

[29]Har Gopal Kaul, *Guldasta-i-Kashmir*, and Glancy Commission, *Report on the Disorders in Kashmir* (1931).

[30]Sufi, *Islamic Culture*, p. 43.

[31]*Tarikh-i-Ferishta*, trans. J. Briggs as *History of the Rise of the Muhammadan Power in India till 1612* (Calcutta, 1808–10), pp. 464–5.

their religion or their country, poisoned themselves; some emigrated from their native homes while a few escaped the evil of banishment by becoming Muhammadans.'[32]

In his chronicle, Jonaraja presented a more melodramatic portrayal. Under the Sultan, 'The kingdom of Kashmir was polluted by the evil practices of the mlechchas; the Brahmins, mantras and [even] the Gods relinquished their power. Images became mere stones and mantras mere letters.'[33]

Both Ferishta and Jonaraja attributed Sikander's actions to the influence of his minister, Suha Bhatta, a Brahman convert. Jonaraja stated that, when Brahmans 'declared they would die if they lost caste, Suha Bhatta subjected them to a heavy fine because they held to their caste.'[34] The minister then 'became apprehensive that the twice born would keep their caste by going over to foreign countries. He ordered guards to allow only those with passports to cross the border.'[35]

'A multitude of Brahmins,' the *Rajatarangini* of Jonaraja continued, 'who prided themselves on their caste fled from the country through by-roads as the main roads were closed. The Brahmins fled to foreign countries, the son left the father and the father the son . . .. The difficult country through which they passed, the scanty food, the painful illnesses and the torments of hell during their lifetimes removed the fear of hell from their minds . . . .'[36]

Jonaraja alluded to those Brahmans who 'forsook their caste because they were ambitious to obtain the favour of the king.'[37] The standard eighteenth-century history of Kashmir, the *Wāqiāt-i-Kashmir*, also stressed the rewards of conversion. 'At this time,' wrote Muhammad Azim, 'there were many kafirs . . .Those who did not accept Islam were humiliated and made to pay the jizya while those who converted were enriched by rewards and favours.'[38] These two remarks seem to suggest that conversion among the upper social ranks was voluntary; that inducements to accept Islam were great. The imputation that a Brahman could be tempted to voluntarily surrender his caste if the remuneration were sufficient would not, however, be a point that members of

[32]Ferishta, *Tarikh*, p. 465. [33]Jonaraja, *Rajatarangini*, p. 60.
[34]Ibid., p. 65. [35]Ibid. [36]Ibid., p. 67. [37]Ibid., p. 65.
[38]Muhammad Azim, *Waqiat*, p. 102.

the community would now care to dwell upon. Conversion undoubtedly was both a matter of survival and self interest. But the Pandits prefer to emphasize their martyrdom. Kaul thus wrote, 'The Brahmins were firm in strictly keeping their caste. Death's dark vale had absolutely no terror for them. There remained only eleven families, all others having been converted or having fled the country.'[39]

These eleven families have passed into history. Haig perpetuated the legend of the survival of eleven families in his work on Kashmir.[40] The *Cambridge History of India* also repeated it.[41] The 'eleven families' became a 'codeword'; when the credentials of the Kashmiri Brahmans as 'pukka' Brahmans were being scrutinized and their intimacy with the Muslims in the plains questioned, the legend itself was the basis of the Pandits' defence. An article appeared in the community magazine *Murasla-i-Kashmir* in 1872, therefore, which described the Pandits' resistance to persecution, stressing the fact that this was an example of *Hindu* resistance to *Muslim* oppression. The article went on to explain that it was only the poorer people in Kashmir who had opted for Islam, whereas (it reminded its critics), on the plains it was the upper levels of society that accepted Islam.[42] Twenty years later, the *Safir-i-Kashmir* published several essays which once again voiced the assertion that the Pandits left Kashmir to save their religious identity.[43] These articles met two needs; the need of members of the community to know their roots at a time of growing uncertainty and the need to defend their communal identity at a time of increased polarization.

There is one other element in the conventional history of the Kashmiri Pandits at this time which has gone unchallenged and unexamined. This is the claim that the only non-Muslims who remained in the Valley were Brahmans. 'It is wondered why the Hindus of Kashmir are today entirely composed of the Brahmins,'

[39]Kaul, *The Kashmiri Pandit*, p. 46.

[40]Haig, 'Chronology and Genealogy of the Muhammadan Kings of Kashmir', *J.R.A.S.* (1918), No. XV.

[41]*Cambridge History of India*, Vol. III, p. 281. Lawrence, of course, refers to the eleven families as well.

[42]*Murasla-i-Kashmir*, No. 2 (February, 1872), anonymous letter.

[43]See for example, *Safir-i-Kashmir* for March and April 1893. I have met only two Kashmiris who claimed descent from one of the eleven, although every member of the community is familiar with the reference. Even in these two cases, the reference was vague.

wrote Kapur. 'The explanation is not far to seek. Hinduism in Kashmir had the strongest hold on the Brahmins and it was they who had most to lose by conversion.'[44] As Jonaraja and others indicated, however, the Brahmans also had very much to gain by conversion. The impression that the Kashmiri Brahmans had been brave martyrs served to ease their integration into Hindu society.

Sikander's reign left numerous other inconsistencies and contradictions. The role of the convert Suha Bhatta is a puzzling one. Jonaraja stated that it was his influence which led Sikander to 'surpass the limits' in his treatment of the Kashmiri Hindus.[45] According to the sixteenth-century chronicler Nizamuddin Ahmad, however, it was only after the Sultan's death that his minister was allowed to dictate policy and at this point, 'most Hindus left the country and some killed themselves.'[46] Jonaraja maintained that borders were sealed and that Brahmans were prevented from escaping.[47] Ferishta indicated, instead, that those who refused Islam were banished.[48]

The fact that certain actions may have had non-religious motivation should also be mentioned. It is quite possible, for example, that the pillage of the temples was engineered for material rather than religious reasons. It seems likely that the wealth needed to buy off a potential invasion from Timur could only be procured from the still considerable resources of the temples. In the fourteenth-century *Malfuzat-i-Timuri*, Timur recorded that his ministers had fixed too heavy a ransom demand upon the Sultan by requiring a contribution of 30,000 horses and a lakh of silver *tankhas*. 'I told my ministers they had put too heavy a burden on the neck of Shah Iskander, that the tax and tribute of a country ought to be in proportion to its income. I immediately reassured the ambassador to the Shah.'[49]

If Sikander has come to symbolize one interpretation of the history of Kashmiri Brahmans, an interpretation which emphasizes religious victimization by and resistance to Muslim sovereignty, his younger son, Zain-ul-Abidin (1420–70) has come to

[44]Kapur, *Studies*, p. 178. [45]Jonaraja, *Rajatarangini*, p. 66.
[46]Nizamuddin Ahmad, *Tarikh-i-Akhbarat*, trans. B. Dey (Calcutta, 1927-39), p. 648. [47]Jonaraja, *Rajatarangini*, p. 66. [48]Ferishta, *Tarikh*, p. 465.
[49]*Malfuzat-i-Timuri*, trans. Elliot and Dowson, *History of India*, Vol. III (Lucknow), p. 470.

represent an alternative understanding of their tradition by the Pandits.

The first portrayal of the Pandits' past dwells on their religious purity as the first of the Aryans. It emphasized the depth of their commitment to their Brahmanical identity and their preference for death and exile to conversion. The second version places the Kashmiris in an explicitly non-religious framework as an enlightened community above sectarian considerations. It exemplifies a more civilized adherence to harmonious communal relations and a syncretic culture. This version takes its inspiration from Zain-ul-Abidin just as the first version comes from a fixation upon the Sultanate under Sikander.

The major change under Zain-ul-Abidin was to make the distinction between Muslim and Hindu less critical. 'The king looked with equal eyes upon his own as upon others. As traders do not allow any inequality in their scales so the king did not brook inequality,' remarked Jonaraja of his patron.[50]

Both personally and politically, the Sultan seems to have repudiated the dichotomy between Muslim and non-Muslim. He 'cultivated the society of all classes. He had acquired much learning and skill in arts and in his assemblies men of intellect, both Hindu and Muslims were always present.'[51] He also fashioned himself into a figure with which Hindus could identify; he did not eat meat in certain months and forbade hunting.[52] According to Srivara's *Rajatarangini*, he even participated in Hindu religious festivals such as *Nagayatra*,[53] while Jonaraja described royal pilgrimages to Hindu shrines.[54] He is said by the chronicles to have constructed quarters for pilgrims, supplied free food to the devout and, according to Nizamuddin Ahmad was 'adept in the occult science of the yogis.'[55]

Culturally, the reign of Zain-ul-Abidin established trends that anticipated developments at Akbar's court over a century later. The Sultan did not merely preside over mixed assemblies, but he 'was himself acquainted with Persian, Indian, Tibetan, and other

[50]Jonaraja, *Rajatarangini*, pp. 77–8.
[51]Nizamuddin Ahmad, *Tarikh-i-Akhbarat*, pp. 652-3. [52]Ibid., pp. 652–3.
[53]Srivara's *Rajatarangini*, trans. J.C. Dutt as *Kings of Kashmir* (Calcutta, 1874–98), p. 124.
[54]Jonaraja, *Rajatarangini*, p.
[55]Nizamuddin Ahmad, *Tarikh-i-Akhbarat*, p. 661.

languages; and many books in the Arabic and Persian languages were translated by his orders into the Hindvi language, and the *Mahabharata* and the book called *Rajatarangini* were translated into Persian by his orders,'[56] Har Gopal conceded that the monarch recovered rare books for the Brahmans, that he listened to Srivara recite from Sanskrit texts, and even had the *Nilamata Purana* read to him.[57]

Not surprisingly, the effect of the Sultan's policies was to diminish the authority and influence of orthodox Islam. 'The customs of the Hindus and their acts of sacrilege attained such magnitude and popularity that the ulema, the learned, the saiyids and the qazis, instead of showing repugnance, began performing these customs themselves. Practices were adopted which led to the weakening of Islam and contributed to the strength of the faithless infidels.'[58] With evident satisfaction, Jonaraja noted, 'Turuskas who were much alarmed did not now oppress the Brahmins.'[59]

Nizamuddin states that the first thing the Sultan did was recall the Brahmans. He then 'caused a general toleration of all religions to be publicly notified. Temples again were permitted to be built and each individual worshipped his god agreeably to the faith in which he was educated.'[60]

According to Nizamuddin, those Brahmans who had been forcibly converted were allowed to reconvert.[61] The assertion that Brahman converts 'apostasized again' has occasioned much debate. The Sanskrit chronicles are silent on this point. Later historians disagree among themselves. Zutshi (1978) accepts the possibility of reconversion, arguing that historically, the main deterrent to 'apostasy' was an Islamic law under which the conversion of Muslims was a capital offence and citing examples of reconversion during the Delhi Sultanate to support this view.[62]

Sri Kanth Kaul (1966) disputes the possibility of reconversion. 'Owing to their rigid system of ceremonial purity and the notions

[56]Ibid., p. 659.
[57]Har Gopal Kaul, *Guldasta-i-Kashmir*, p. 110.
[58]N.K. Zutshi, *Zain-ul-Abidin of Kashmir: An Age of Enlightenment*, quoting from *Baharistan-i-Shahi* (Lucknow, 1978), pp. 82–5.
[59]Jonaraja, *Rajatarangini*, p. 77.
[60]Nizamuddin Ahmad, *Tarikh-i-Akhbarat*, p. 657.
[61]Ibid., p. 654.
[62]Zutshi, *Zain-ul-Abidin*, p. 70.

of defilement, many Hindus could not have profited by the opportunity of coming back to their original fold.'[63] Aziz Ahmad supports this position.[64] In his chronicle, Srivara did mention the sort of polluting contact to which Aziz Ahmad also refers. 'The Turuskas seated themselves in the houses of the Brahmins who had devoted themselves to the performance of the six duties, they ate from the vessels of the Brahmins the cooked meat of fowls and gave themselves up to the pleasures of drinking.'[65]

In his work on *The Kashmiri Pandit* (1924) Anand Kaul alluded to an incident of conversion by pollution and its partial reversal through expiation. 'During the Muhammadan rule, some Brahmins were once given the option to either submit to the sword or take food prepared by a Mussalman .... In their anxiety to reduce pollution to the minimum, they made the Mussalman cook boiled rice in a new *lej* or earthen pot. When ready, they took it out from the *lej* with their own hands and reluctantly ate it. They afterwards expiated for the forcible pollution by performing *prayashchitta* but still, the *biradari*, who were as punctilious as ever, ostracized them, condemning them for not having preferred death to losing their caste by pollution.'[66]

The oral tradition of the community does retain a vague memory of conversion and reconversion. There is a distinction (although only a few Pandits seem aware of it), between 'jhuti haddi' or 'dirty bones' and 'succhi haddi' or pure bones. The former characterization is applied to those families said to have reconverted during the reign of Zain-ul-Abidin.[67]

The Sultan restored political influence to the Brahmans as he had returned their religious privileges. From the highest administrative levels in the capital to the outposts of the rural revenue structure, Brahmans were once again found. Most crucial was the sovereign's decision to encourage the Pandits to study Persian. Literacy in Persian would prove more lucrative in the long term than any single appointment, whatever the perquisites. Families

[63]Sri Kanth Kaul, Introduction to Hindi translation of the *Rajatarangini* (Hoshiarpur, 1966), p. 106.

[64]Aziz Ahmad, *Tarikh-i-Akhbarat*, pp. 14–5.

[65]Srivara, *Rajatarangini*, p. 261. Aziz Ahmad does not cite this or any other source.

[66]Kaul, *The Kashmiri Pandit*, p. 22.

[67]Interview with Gopi Nath Handoo, Delhi, August 1979.

such as the Saprus who first attained fluency in Persian at this time would capitalize on that knowledge to secure appointments and would do this for centuries.[68] Thus, by the end of his reign, Zain-ul-Abidin, acting either out of justice or expediency, had restored to the Pandits control over traditional rituals and material resources.

As a result of experiences during the course of the fifteenth century, the structure of the community was irrevocably transformed. At this time, the Kashmiri Pandit *biradari* acquired its fundamental form, both in its internal organization and in its relation with outside social groups. These were the formative years. Prior to the establishment of Muslim rule in the valley, the Kashmiri Brahmans had been divided into 199 exogamous *gotras*, 'the members of which professed to be descended from the rishi whose name the gotra (bore).'[69] (According to some accounts, there were either three or six original *gotras*; the number swelled through intermarriage.)[70]

Distinction by *gotras* were now supplemented by distinctions between Pandits who had remained in Kashmir and Pandits who had returned during the reign of Zain-ul-Abidin. Those who had stayed were known as *Malmasis*; those who had not stayed were known as the *Bhanamasis*. Some confusion arises over the identity of this second group. One source, quoting one Pandit Radha Kishen, wrote that the eleven families remaining in Kashmir imported Agnihotri Brahmans of the Dravida with whom they intermarried as being of the same origin.[71] Kaul (1924) referred to the arrival of Brahmans from the Deccan,[72] while Lawrence (1895) mentioned southern Brahmans in the train of the exiled Pandits,[73] and Madan (1965) called the Bhanamasis 'returnees.'[74]

[68]Fauq, *Tarikh i Aquam i Kashmir* (Srinagar, 1934), p. 43; and S. Abdullah, *Adabiyat Farsi Men Hinduon ka Qissa* (Delhi, 1942), p. 10.

[69]Kaul, *The Kashmiri Pandit*, p. 19.

[70]Har Gopal Kaul, *Guldasta-i-Kashmir*, p. 3.

[71]*Census of the Northwest Provinces* for 1865, p. 145. It is likely that this Pandit was Radha Kishen Sapru, then a Deputy Collector.

[72]Kaul, *The Kashmiri Pandit*, p. 46.

[73]Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 192.

[74]Madan, *Family and Kinship*, p. 20.

The labels themselves 'have reference to the astrological calendar observed by the two races, Malmasis meaning those who belong to lunar and Bhanamasis to the solar months.' [75] The distinction in itself did not imply differing social status, nor did it interfere with intermarriage between the two groups.

A more important distinction also evolved during the Sultanate period. It emerged as a solution to the problem confronting the Brahmans as a result of Muslim control over part of their world. In an ideal social environment, a Hindu ruler would provide for the material needs of the Brahmans and facilitate the transmission of their cultural heritage. Once political authority rested with Muslims, however, the requirements for material survival began to diverge from those for perpetuating their cultural heritage.

In response to this bifurcation, the Pandits developed an internal duality corresponding to the divergent necessities of political and ritual worlds. Those who specialized in the secular sphere, who studied Persian and undertook administrative employment, became known as the *karkuns*; and those who engaged in ritual practices requiring knowledge of Sanskrit were labelled *bhasha bhatts* , and informally known as the *gurus*.

The evolution of this tidy arrangement was undoubtedly a lengthy process. Eventually, the functional distinction acquired rigidity, and the two segments of the community formed endogamous sections. Lawrence believed that the reason intermarriage ceased between *karkun* and *guru* was that the *gurus* 'are [were] partly regarded as divine and partly because the laity abhor their practice of accepting the apparel of deceased Hindus.'[76]

In the Census, it was noted that 'the *Karkuns* strictly refrain[ed] from *Dan* [receiving charity] and [did] not as a rule take a wife from the *Bachabats*. In all other respects, irrespective of gotra, clan, caste, or subdivision, they observe[d] the same customs, religious rites and [were] otherwise on [terms of] perfect equality with one another.'[77] Theoretically this was so. The two subdivisions have nominally been equal in status, although in practice the Karkuns have been considered superior. 'Numerically preponderant and economically better off, the Karkuns have arrogated to themselves the higher position in the Pandit social hierarchy. The

[75]Kaul, *The Kashmiri Pandit*, p. 47. For lists of the Malamasi and Bhanamasi clans see Kaul, appendices 4 and 5 or *Census of Kashmir*, 1901

[76]Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 303.

[77]*Census of Kashmir*, 1901, p. 136.

*gor* [the gurus] are regarded as inauspicious, mean and greedy. The reason for this attitude seems to be the fact that they receive food and other gifts from their jajmans [patrons] in the name of the dead."[78]

The acknowledged superiority of the *karkun* was based on a superior socioeconomic position. Correspondingly, the denigration of the *guru* has been grounded on the perception that the priest, in fact, is a beggar.[79]

In most areas of India, coming to terms with the Muslims meant accepting Muslim political sovereignty. In Kashmir, furthermore, it also required adjustment to a society that was as Muslim as its government. Greater necessity thus demanded greater compromise. Fifteenth-century Kashmiri society was, therefore, marked by a larger degree of polarization between the secularist and the ritualist wings of the community.

Polarization meant that the secular world would not threaten the ritual world. It also meant that the ritualists would be less able to interfere with the secularists. Because the two spheres were divorced, a more liberal definition of pollution was made possible for those not engaged in ritual functions. This liberality facilitated close association with Muslims without risk of excommunication. *Karkuns* could achieve worldly success wihout risk of excommunication, and without jeopardizing their Brahmanical standing. But because their own prosperity was tied to that of the *karkuns*, objections from the *gurus* to the *karkun*'s proximity with the Mulims were unlikely to be vociferous. The arrangement contributed to utility, mobility and self-preservation.

The geographic isolation of Kashmir from Hindusthan made compromise easier. Departure from the orthodox standards of the plains could go unnoticed. Moreover, the Kashmiri Brahmans were priests only to their own community. Outside restraints were not, therefore, forthcoming. The functional differentiation of the Pandit community into *karkun* and *guru* branches seems to have been a successful adaptation to the problems posed by the Sultanate. Adaptation to the Muslim presence set a pattern that facilitated adjustment to later newcomers. Having already sealed off the sacred realm, the Pandits were more free to make changes in

[78]Madan, *Family and Kinship*, p. 23.

[79]These attitudes are found in other regions of India as well. See, for example, P. Tandon, *Punjabi Century* (London, 1963), pp. 76–7.

the secular realm. What worked in a Muslim-dominated environment may also have proved useful under a later Angrezi Raj. What was a solution in a world controlled by *mlechchas* became, however, a problem in a world of resurgent, modern Hinduism. This is what the Kashmiri Pandits faced in the late nineteenth century.

The superior status of the secular Pandits in Kashmir confirms those sociological studies which stress socioeconomic factors rather than considerations of purity and pollution as determining position, and emphasize the economic rather than the ritual underpinnings of caste.[80] Examination of the community supports the claim that secular considerations tended to determine status and that secular occupation was crucial in establishing rank. To the extent that this tends to be more characteristic of regions marginal to the heartland of Aryavarta, this study also supports the validity of a regional approach to the analysis of the caste system. The relative precedence of the *karkun* in Kashmir is comparable to the social situation of Kumaon as described by Sanwal, who claimed that ultimate status in that area is defined by its association with the highest bureaucratic offices. In other regions, however, the opposite conclusion may be drawn. Thus, Khare's study of the Kanyakubja Brahmans of U.P. vindicates, equally correctly, the view that the ritual pre-empts and encompasses the secular.[81]

In the *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, written in 1542, Mirza Haider observed that after Zain-ul-Abidin, 'the power of the sultans of Kashmir began to decline and the amirs became so strong that the sultan ruled in name only.'[82] Non-Muslims participated in revolts against the Sultan. As a result of this, Hasan Shah (1472–84) finally cut off the noses of Brahmans and took their property. He thus forced the Brahmins to 'give up their caste and dress and exclaim, "I am not a Bhatta."'[83]

[80]See in particular R. D. Sanwal, *Social Stratification in Rural Kumaon* (Delhi, 1976).

[81]R.S. Khare, *The Changing Brahmans, Association and Elites among the Kanya-Kubjas of North India* (Chicago, 1970).

[82]Mirza Haider, *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, trans. E.D. Ross and N. Elias (London, 1815), p. 434.

[83]Srivara, *Rajatarangini*, p. 195.

Control of the throne of Kashmir alternated between Muhammad Shah and Fateh Shah in the years between 1487 and 1537 and then between their respective sons. The former was supported by the Sayyids and the latter by the Chaks (a Shiite group originally from Dardistan) and the indigenous noble converts, Rainas, Magres, and Dars.

In 1492, one of the most controversial figures in Kashmiri history, Shams-ud-din Iraqi, arrived to prosyletise on behalf of the Naqshabandis.[84] This Sufi order was considered highly unorthodox by the Sunni Sayyids of the valley who suspected Shams-ud-din Iraqi of secret Shia leanings. At first he was unable to obtain official patronage and departed. When he returned, however, he was able to secure the support of the then wazir, Musa Raina, for his plans to gain adherents.

As a result of the presence of Mir Shams-ud-din Iraqi, the unknown author of the *Baharistan* maintained that 'all traces of infidelity and idol worship were replaced by Islamic symbols, and the infidels and holy thread wearers (Brahmins) of Kashmir were converted into Islam and rewarded sumptuously, so much . . . that Mir Shams-ud-din, with the help of Musa Raina was able to convert 24,000 Brahmin families to Islam.'[85] The extent to which Shams-ud-din succeeded in his attempt to make Kashmir totally Islamic is debatable, however. Muhammad Azim, writing in 1749, stated 'Iraqi pressed for conversions but was not very successful.'[86] Nizamuddin Ahmad (sixteenth century) emphasized the iconoclasm of Shams-ud-din Iraqi, referring to how his followers attempted to 'ruin and destroy all the temples of the kafirs and nobody dared to forbid them.[87]

Reference to the '24,000 Brahmans' as a mythic or symbolic number has an evocative power. It is similar to the image of the eleven families said to have survived the reign of Sikander in the legendary history of the Pandits. In fact, however, Shams-ud-din Iraqi operated under considerable restraints. His campaign met opposition from Muslims as well as Hindus. 'Once when the Hindus were celebrating the spring festival . . . Shams-ud-din proceeded to put a stop to the festivities on the grounds that Muslims

[84]M. Hasan, *Tarikh-i-Hasan*, p. 106
[85]*Baharistan-i-Shahi*, quoted in Kapur, p. 182.
[86]Muhammad Azim, *Waqiat*, p. 117.
[87]Nizamuddin Ahmad, *Tarikh-i-Akhbarat*, p. 690.

were participating in the religious ceremonies while men and women in general were freely drinking wine and indulging in immoral practices. When, next morning, the Hindus complained to Fateh Shah, he was so angry he wanted to put Shams-ud-din to death but was dissuaded by his counsellors.'[88] The passage quoted above is noteworthy for its demonstration of a continued cross-communal participation in festivities and the lack of 'orthodoxy' which seems always to have characterized Kashmir.

The century between the end of the reign of Zain-ul-Abidin (d. 1470) and the incorporation of Kashmir into the Mughal Empire under Akbar (1586) bears a message of political ambiguity and socio-religious confusion. The line between Hindu and Muslim continued to waver. Srivara writing in the sixteenth century, for example, referred to 'some merchants of the city who were favourites of the Mausalas (Muslims) but who followed the customs of the Hindus from their birth [yet] killed cows within the city'.[89] Shuka lamented that 'all men become alike, be they of good or evil habits, be they learned or the *Bhuttas*,'[90] and criticized the Brahmans for not carrying out 'the duties of their caste'.

The *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* (1542) conveyed a similar portrait of laxity in the 'religious' practices in Kashmir. Blame for this Mirza Haider fixed upon the Sufis. 'The Sufis have legitimized so many heresies they know nothing of what is lawful . . . They give way to their lusts and desires in a way not consistent with the law . . . . They are forever interpreting dreams, displaying miracles and obtaining from the unseen information regarding either the future or the past. Nowhere else is such a band of heretics to be found.'[91]

The Chaks who ruled Kashmir at the end of the Sultanate period were not committed to a policy of imposed Islamization. The Brahmans were required to pay the *jizya*, but they continued to serve in the administration and to receive land grants. Husain Shah (1563–70) participated in Hindu religious festivals and invited Brahmans to his court. The Brahmans may have lost their privileged tax-exempt status—the most lucrative sources of livelihood, but even Shuka, in his sixteenth-century description of the Brahmans of this time, did not allude to systematic persecution and enforced conversion. 'The Brahmins went to other countries.

[88]Hasan, quoting *Tuhfat-i-Ahbab*, p. 236.
[89]Srivara, *Rajatarangini*, p. 353.
[90]Shuka, p. 339. [91]Mirza Haider, *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, p. 436.

Their means of livelihood consumed, they did not remain. They left, the objects of laughter and reproach.'[92] Material rather than religious considerations seemed to have been crucial.

Shuka, writing in the sixteenth century, conveyed the impression that if the Brahmans had been exempt from the levies of the Sultan, all would have been well. When one minister sought the advice of a pious Hindu, he was counselled only to lift the tax.[93] The minister refused. It remained for the Emperor Akbar to lend a more sympathetic ear to this request.[94] He proceeded to Martand, according to the chronicle, and distributed cows adorned with pearls and gold to his new Brahman subjects.

[92]Shuka, pp. 420–1. [93]Ibid., p. 382. [94]Ibid.

CHAPTER III

# The Mughal Empire

With the incorporation of Kashmir into the Mughal empire, accounts of the Kashmiri Pandit community moved from murky legend and tradition into the clear light of history; from vague generalities to sharp specificities. To place the Pandits in context at this time it is first necessary to examine briefly the Mughal empire itself. Both the material world in which the Pandits aspired to participate and the ideal world which they attempted to reflect must be appreciated if we are to understand their role in society and in the ruling class, as Pandits were shaped in the years of Mughal dominion.

The Mughal empire was both a political structure and a cultural sphere. As such it influenced diverse groups in various ways. The Kashmiri Brahmans chose to identify with the Mughal system to a greater extent than did most non-Muslims. Imperial models set cultural standards for both communal-definition and self-definition that persisted long after the material rationale for their adoption had passed. The political culture of the Mughals partially explains why it was that Kashmiri Brahmans participated in the imperial government. It should be stressed, however, that their participation was not as anomalous as it first appeared. One can explain their identity with the Mughals in historic terms; precedents already existed. Kashmiris had for centuries been involved with Islamic rulers in Srinagar. Rather than departure from a past role, their association with the Mughals represented a continuity of tradition, a tradition of government service.

Just as the Mughal dynasty attempted to grasp the separate strands of kinship and territorial loyalties, so it tried to become the focal point for the diverse religious groups of India. The much heralded tolerance of Akbar was designed to bring all his subjects under his wing; to draw upon differentiated symbols of legitimacy; to be a Hindu *raja* and a Padsha-i-Islam simultaneously.

The development of a non-communal, non-exclusive legitimation led to the development of a cross-communal administrative service class. 'Although Akbar's empire was Muslim in its foundations and the ultimate locus of its power,' Hodgson remarks, 'yet Hindus and Muslims cooperated effectively in its actual management and jointly reaped its benefits in wealth and splendor'.[1] Contemporary chronicles evoke an environment in which relations between Hindus and Muslims were non-antagonistic. Cleavages rested on class rather than upon religious lines and the prevailing standards were aristocratic rather than communal.

'An emperor, or whoever may be in his stead,' wrote Ghulam Hussain in the eighteenth-century *Saiyar-ul-Mukhtaqherin*, 'being in fact the shadow of God, must render himself conformable to his prototype, and as the Almighty chooses to suffer the diversity of clans and religions amongst his creatures and He nourishes with an equal hand those that obey and those that disobey His commands, so it becomes the Princes and Rulers of the world to imitate his goodness in abstaining from such partialities as would prove an inclination to one side.'[2] According to this chronicle, the dominant divisions at court were based less on community than upon consideration of birth and background. Ghulam Muhammad's courtiers were either parvenus or old grandees. Court struggles usually had as their aim the displacement of the established by newcomers.[3]

Examining the character and composition of the ruling class in the later years of the empire, Satish Chandra (1959) concluded that these struggles were 'partly personal and partly political and cut across racial and religious groups.'[4] Measures which appeared to discriminate on communal grounds often, in fact, had a class bias. Thus the ban on the use of *palkis*, horses, *raths*, and elephants may periodically have been reaffirmed, but 'it appeared that the order applied only to junior Hindu noblemen who tried to ape the great nobles.'[5]

The most enduring grievance of the Hindus, the symbol of their

[1]Marshall G. S Hodgson, *Venture of Islam* (Chicago, 1934), Vol. 2, p. 67.

[2]Ghulam Husain Khan Tabat i Haji, *Saiyar-ul-Mukhtaqherin*, trans. M. Raymond Chaji Mustafa (Calcutta, 1902), Vol. 3, p. 180.

[3]See for example, Ghulam Husain, *Saiyar*, Vol. 2, p. 198.

[4]Satish Chandra, *Parties and Politics at the Mughal Court* (Aligarh, 1959), p. 128.

[5]Ibid., p. 56.

subordinate status under an Islamic political authority, was the *jizya*. This was a 'protection' tax. It was levied on all non-Muslims because they were exempt from military service, but it was perceived more often as a punitive device for those who declined to accept Islam. According to Satish Chandra, in the 197 years between 1526, when Babur established his dominion, and 1739, when Nadir Shah swept the field at Panipat, the tax was actually collected for only fifty-seven years.[6] Moreover, financial considerations as much as doctrinal or ideological factors seemed to have been the motivating force when the tax was actually levied.[7] In addition, the poor were generally exempt from payment of the *jizya*. More importantly, government servants were as well.[8] And finally it should be noted that the Hindus were rarely so weak or demoralized that they could not launch spirited resistance at efforts to collect the tax.

'The Mughal nobility,' Athar Ali (1960) noted, 'combined the status of an aristocracy and the function of a bureaucracy in one group.'[9] The nobles found their independent sources of power increasingly subject to central control; from adversaries of empire, they became its instrument. Both Satish Chandra and Athar Ali have described the process by which the nobility was 'bureaucratized', retaining its character as a ruling class while acquiring some of the characteristics of a civil service.[10] The nobility, as portrayed by these scholars, constituted a 'self perpetuating, but not a closed corporation. Birth was a qualification, but merit and learning were as well.'[11] The system, therefore, incorporated a degree of mobility which was extended to Hindus as well as Muslims.

Recruitment of Hindus was a consistent part of Mughal policy. Although this practice is largely associated with Akbar, even those emperors theoretically committed to a more sectarian vision, maintained it. 'Despite all the theoretical decisions taken by Aurangzeb against the employment of Hindus to higher revenue

[6]Ibid., p. 261. Irvine describes how Muhammad Shah was persuaded by Raja Jai Singh Sawai to repeal the tax upon his accession to the throne in 1719 because the Hindus were more loyal subjects (Vol. 2, p. 103).

[7]Ibid.

[8]W. Irvine, *Later Mughals* (reprint Delhi, 1971), p. 338.

[9]M. Athar Ali, *Muslim Nobility Under Aurangzeb* (Bombay, 1966), p. 149.

[10]Satish Chandra, *Parties and Politics*, p. xxvi.

[11]Ibid., p. xxvii.

offices, in actual practice, he appointed more competent Hindus as higher mansabdars in the interest of sound administration than any of his predecessors.'[12] As the ability to penetrate local society grew, the need for recruits to staff the imperial apparatus grew apace. A shortage of educated Muslims and the fact that local revenue records were probably kept in Indian languages[13] meant that Hindus were 'the backbone of local administration'.[14]

The introduction of Persian as the language of administration in 1582 was part of the commitment to a centralized administrative apparatus. It was designed to 'strengthen the bureaucracy at the expense of the local zamindars. The reform assumed, however, the possibility of recruiting reliable personnel who would be able to carry out the office routines of a large-scale government. For such a system to work there had to be a substantial reservoir of people literate in Persian and able to participate in Mughal culture, a reservoir far in excess of the restricted members of the ruling class.'[15]

It was administrative necessity that brought the Kashmiri Pandits into the imperial governing structure. With long traditions as administrative servants, they had turned to mastery of Persian over a century prior to Todar Mal's decision to make Persian the court language.

It does not make good historical sense to regard their official involvement as curious merely because the Kashmiris did not share the religious beliefs of the Mughals. In Kashmir contact between Muslim and non-Muslim was unavoidable. The definition of Sanskritic 'orthodoxy' was either weaker or different. This is less important, however, than the fact that the preoccupation with absolute categories (and with perceptions that stress the 'Brahman' aspect of the Pandits and oppose it to the 'Islamic' aspect of the State) is itself distorted.

That the Pandits were 'Hindus' was only meaningful in a limited way. That they were 'Hindus' did not mean that there was much in their religious beliefs that was shared with other 'Hindus'. The

[12]Athar Ali, *Mughal Nobility*, p. 32.

[13]Aziz Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment* (Oxford, 1969), pp. 103–4.

[14]Lelyveld, *Aligarh's First Generation*, p. 29.

[15]Ibid., pp. 30–1.

Kashmiri form of Hinduism was distinctive. Kashmiri Saivism incorporated numerous Tantric rituals that would be considered unorthodox even in the broad range of permissible religious behaviour traditionally sanctioned for Brahmans. The carnivorous diet to which the Kashmiris insistently (but later somewhat defensively) clung, for example, was anathema to the vegetarian Brahmans of the plains. In culture as well as in religion, the Pandits of Kashmir differed from the Brahmans of Aryavarta. When not clustered in the sacred centres, the Brahmans of north India were found in rural areas; the Kashmiris were urban creatures. And finally, the Kashmiris tended to be far more educated than the Brahmans of the plains.

Thus, to view the Pandits as Kashmiris is more sensible than to view them as 'Brahmins'. Regional rather than religious qualities were the salient component of identity. That the Kashmiris were viewed as distinct because of their regional origins rather than their communal affiliations is evident from the chronicles of the time. Although these refer largely to Kashmiri Muslims, to be from Kashmir meant placement in a separate category and applied as well to the Pandits. Abul Fazl refers to Kashmiris as a separate nationality along with Iranis, Turanis, etc.;[16] in biographical dictionaries such as the *Maathir-ul-amara*, courtiers from the valley can be identified by the adjective 'Kashmiri' invariably appended to their name.

Neither emperors nor chroniclers seemed to have eyed the Kashmiris with particular fondness. In the early years of the Mughal empire, few Kashmiris were made *mansabdars*. Despite the fact that he promoted large numbers of them, Aurangzeb informed his son, Prince Muazzam, that to be a Kashmiri was a disqualification.[17] Referring to the valley, Abul Fazl wrote, 'the bane of this country is its people',[18] most of whom were represented by the chronicler as faithless, cunning, opportunistic and obsequious. At one point Ghulam Hussain lamented the fact that the court was 'full of eunuchs, gentoos, and Kashmiris'.[19] Mehdi Ali Khan the

[16]Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, trans. H. Blochmann (Calcutta, 1939), Vol. I, pp. 110, 140, 169.

[17]Athar Ali, *Mughal Nobility*, p. 221.

[18]Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. 2, p. 413.

[19]Ghulam Husain, *Saiyar*, Vol. 1, p. 105.

Kashmiri was referred to as 'that artful man'.[20] Muhammad Murad Kashmiri, the maternal uncle of Farrukhsiyar and a *wazir*, was believed to be a sycophant and a braggart[21] and his was the only *jagir* to be confiscated following his nephew's deposition.[22] (This noble was 'loud-voiced and foul'.[23])

A Kashmiri who did not conform to this stereotype was considered exceptional. 'It is true he was a Kashmiri, but yet proved a man of excellent qualifications,' observed Ghulam Hussain of one extraordinary case.[24] Shah Nawaz Khan was even more explicit in his denunciation of the Kashmiris. 'Kashmiris have a seditious, intriguing nature,' he remarked.[25] 'As the nature of all inhabitants of that country is prone to commotion and intrigue, there is not a day without intrigue and not a month without disturbance.'[26] The only strong point of the Kashmiris seems to have been their fair skin. Bernier thought that Mughal officers attempted to marry Kashmiris so that their children would have whiter skins.[27]

The behaviour attributed to Kashmiri nobles was remarkable for its extremity. In a world where to be a Kashmiri was to be considered suspect, it is possible that both Kashmiri Muslims and Kashmiri Pandits over-adapted to prevailing norms.

The most powerful Kashmiri to appear at the imperial court was probably Inayatullah Khan Kashmiri. Following the death of the emperor in 1707, he was given a high appointment but displayed, as Syed Ghulam Hussain recorded disparagingly, 'a severity of which his discernment ought to have pointed out the inexpediency.'[28] It was, for example, Inayatullah Khan who suggested that the *jizya* be reimposed and that the *jagirs* of 'eunuchs, gentoos and Kashmiris' should be confiscated.[29] This plan triggered an angry response that divided the court. The *wazir*, Abdullah Khan, rallied those who favoured a more broadly-based state policy and was ultimately successful in defeating Inayatullah's designs.

[20]Ibid., Vol. III, p. 374. [21]Satish Chandra, *Parties and Politics*, p. 136.
[22]Ibid., p. 144. [23]Irvine, *Later Mughals*, p. 340.
[24]Ghulam Husain, *Saiyar*.
[25]Shah Nawaz Khan, Shams-ud Daula Aurangabadi, *Maasir-al-Umara*, trans. M. Beveridge and B. Prasad (Calcutta, 1911–14), p. 493.
[26]Ibid., p. 512.
[27]F. Bernier, *Travels in the Mughal Empire, 1658-1668* (reprint, Delhi, 1968), p. 404.
[28]Ghulam Hussain, *Saiyar*, Vol. 1, p. 105.
[29]Satish Chandra, *Parties and Politics*, p. 127.

That a Kashmiri should have espoused such an exclusivist imperial programme is expressive, perhaps, of the insecurity of an outsider. Inayatullah Khan was undoubtedly pious. He had performed the *hajj*, the ritual journey to Mecca, and had produced a document from the Sharaf of the holy place stating that the *jizya* was obligatory. Nevertheless, his zeal appears to have been excessive. It was the product of a need to be assimilated into an environment where the Kashmiris were considered foreign.[30]

The Kashmiri Pandits were no less susceptible to a sense of vulnerability than Kashmiri Muslims, not because they were non-Muslims but because they were Kashmiris. To compensate for this awareness that they were a 'foreign' minority, Pandits outwardly adopted all the forms of their new environment. They surrendered much of their tradition in the process, to an extent almost unimaginable for other migrant groups.

In a passage which captures the two divergent features in the Kashmiri pattern of adaptation in the plains, Dhanavanthi (Handoo) Rama Rau wrote:

> They settled in all parts of Northern India from the Punjab to the United Provinces but never really integrated with other Brahmins in their new homeland. History does not record what caused them to uproot themselves, though various theories attribute the exodus to famine, Muslim oppression, or the seeking of job opportunities away from the beautiful but impoverished countryside of Kashmir. They arrived and learned to live in what was almost a different country to them. They were obliged to alter their dress from the loose robes and distinctive head covering of Kashmiris to the Hindu saris for women and pajamas and long coats for men, or to the trousers and tunics dictated by the Muslim Moghul court. They had to learn a new language, adopt a new cuisine and get used to the flat, dry landscape of the North Indian plains. However, they continued to cling to their names and the customs, rites, and ceremonies that belonged particularly to their community.[31]

The Kashmiris outwardly adopted the styles prevailing in their new environment; the sense of insecurity led to extreme conformity in the public spheres of their lives. The Kashmiris had a very

[30]Ibid., p. 127.

[31]Dhanavanthi Rama Rau, *An Inheritance, Memoirs of Dhanavanthi Rama Rau* (New York, 1977), p. 6.

broad definition of what was essential to alter in order to succeed, but what was considered private, what remained of their cultural heritage, they maintained with a rigidity that belies the community image as entirely flexible. The almost total adaptation produced an intense commitment to preserve the customs that were allowed to survive migration.

Later, the apparent success of this arrangement contributed to a positive image of the community as resourceful and flexible. This positive image was one the Pandits consciously stressed afterwards in times of uncertainty and flux. It had, however, a negative underside. Privately, the Kashmiris wondered whether adaptability did not conceal lack of identity and whether attainment of a place in one world did not jeopardize their standing in another. With a foot in both worlds, the Pandits feared they were fully accepted by neither, although for most of the Mughal period to be a non-Muslim was not a liability, nor was lack of conformity to orthodox Brahmanical standards a problem.

The Mughals made a virtue out of a non-communal ruling ethos; the ruling class was bound together by a shared culture based on fluency in Persian. A sophisticated knowledge of the language made possible Kashmiri participation in Mughal culture as much as in imperial administration.[32]

According to later community legends, the Pandits came to the plains in order to preserve their 'religious' identity. They claimed to have come to north India because it was possible to be a Brahman in the plains when it was no longer possible to remain one in Kashmir. Yet ultimately they were more at home in the Mughal capitals of Agra and Delhi than in the sacred cities of Varanasi and Prayag. They took to a secular rather than priestly calling, and perfected their Persian rather than their Sanskrit (which they often then forgot).

Mughal court culture was designed to create a commonality: 'Probably without the development of a cultural life that could appeal to both Muslims and Hindus at a very high level, even in some sense catering to their moral awareness, a vast bureaucracy based on mixed cadres, Muslim and Hindu, could not have functioned so smoothly . . . . The sense of the independent human

[32]Lelyveld, *Aligarh's First Generation*, p. 29; and Hodgson, *Venture of Islam*, p. 81.

worth of artistic creation meant non-Muslims could potentially enter into Islamicate cultural life at an intimate level.'[33]

Although this culture drew upon Islamic tradition for much of its inspiration and symbolism, it was primarily secular and aristocratic and those who were influenced by it found themselves sharing more with each other than with co-religionists who did not participate in it.[34]

Such was the milieu in which the Kashmiris found themselves when the arduous journey down to the plains was successfully completed. The values then learned, the self-image then inculcated were those the Kashmiris transmitted through the generations and brought to later, different environments.

The Kashmiri Brahman presence at the Mughal capitals was not substantial enough to impose itself upon the awareness of contemporary chroniclers; nor did the Pandits as individuals attain the rank that would qualify them for inclusion in the biographical dictionaries of the Mughal *amirs*. Abul Fazl's list of the 'Learned Men of our Time' included several *Bhats*,[35] the *prakrit* form of the Sanskrit 'bhartri', meaning doctor, which is the term the Pandits frequently employed in referring to themselves. Generally, however, one searches in vain for allusions to the Pandits in the common source material. Evidence for their existence at court comes primarily from internal community material.

Community legends attributed the departure of the Pandits from the valley to persecution, whatever the time it occurred. However, the actual history of the few families for whom information can be found suggests instead that immigration to the plains was stimulated, for the most part, by contacts made in the course of imperial travels in Kashmir. Opportunity rather than oppression provided the impetus for migration; where there was a negative element, it stemmed from personal disputes or natural disasters rather than systematic persecution.

[33]Hodgson, *Venture of Islam*, Vol. 2, p. 67.

[34]'It was a culture that had no prerequisites for membership; it included many Hindus and excluded most Muslims . . .The lower levels of the regime probably included an increasing number of Hindus who identified with Mughal styles of dress, manners, architecture, painting, literature, athletic skills, and amusements.' —Lelyveld, *Aligarh's First Generation*, p. 29.

[35]Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. I, p. 542.

In Kashmir, as in the plains, the environment shaping the Pandits was marked more by co-existence than confrontation between the communities.

If the Kashmiri Pandit population of the valley had been reduced during the Sultanate, it had not been extinguished. Both Jahangir and Abul Fazl alluded to the Brahmans of the valley; the courtier estimated them to number 2,000. 'Although in ancient times, the learning of the Hindus was in vogue [among them], at the present day, various sciences are studied and knowledge is more general,' remarked the author of the *Ain*.[36] The mutual tolerance governing relations between Hindus and Muslims was also noted. 'They do not loosen the tongue of calumny against those not of their faith,' he added,[37] while Jahangir commented on the fact that 'outwardly one cannot distinguish them from Mussulmans.'[38]

The composite religious strain in Kashmir was still strong when Sheikh Mohsin Fani (d. 1671) is believed to have composed the *Dabistan-i-Mazahab*. The work included references to several sects which welcomed both Hindus and Muslims. One, for example, was headed by the *pir* Ibrahim Kukak, who had as his disciples members of the two religious communities, 'none of whom he induced to change religion.'[39]

In addition Fani mentioned a Persian translation of the Ramayana done in collaboration by a *mulla* and a Pandit and wrote of a meeting with Kantha Bhatta, a Pandit judge 'invested by Jahangir Padshah with the dignity of a judge of the Hindus in order that they may be tranquillized and in every concern have nothing to demand from Mussulmans as it has been established in the code of Akbar that the tribes of mankind ought to dwell in the shade of the protection of a just king and persevere in the performance of their worship and the exigencies of their devotion.'[40]

Both Hindus and Muslims served in the provincial administration under the Mughals; the Pandits most frequently as

[36]Ibid., p. 351. [37]Ibid., p. 354

[38]Jahangir, Emperor, *Tuzuk-i Jahangiri*, trans. A. Rogers and H. Beveridge (London, 1909–14), p. 150.

[39]Sheikh Mohsin Fani, *Dabistan-i-Mahazab*, trans. David Shea and Antony Troyer, Oriental Translation Fund (London, 1843), Vol. II, p. 166.

[40]Ibid., p. 164-5.

*peshkars*. The folk tradition of Kashmir contains many anecdotes which are based on the humorous competition between Muslim and Pandit subordinates of popular officials such as Ali Mardan Khan, a governor of Kashmir appointed by Shah Jahan.[41]

One of the first Pandits to have surfaced at the Mughal court was Sadanand Kaul.[42] Kaul was invited by Akbar to Agra when the emperor met him on one of his three visits to Kashmir. Sadanand Kaul remained in the Mughal capital following Akbar's death and escorted Jahangir to his homeland. Later Shah Jahan bestowed the title 'Ghumkhuar' upon the Pandit, a title his descendants preserved. Shah Jahan reputedly granted the Kashmiri *jagirs* and a residence in Shahjahanabad when the capital was moved to Delhi.

Another of the early families claiming association with the Mughals was the Dhar family. It is said that the Dhars departed from the valley during the reign of Sultan Sikander and made their way south, eventually finding employment under the Bahmani Sultanate in the Deccan.[43] In the early years of the seventeenth century, Miru Pandit Dhar allegedly was placed in charge of Golconda fort[44] through a connection with one Hakim Abdul Fateh Shirazi, bodyguard of Nur Jahan,[45] Jahangir's consort.

There are several other families including the Bhans and the Mullas who like the Dhars, claim to have left Kashmir in the fourteenth century and eventually figure in Mughal service, but unfortunately material to substantiate these statements is lacking.

[41]J. H. Knowles, *Dictionary of Kashmiri Proverbs and Sayings* (Bombay, 1885). A typical tale focuses on the Pandit servant of this governor and a less well-paid Muslim rival who petitioned the governor for redress and was sent to count the waves in the river. He was unable to. However the Pandit placed four soldiers at every turn of the river and a toll house, and ordered the soldiers to take four rupees from each boatman, the excuse being they had hindered the Pandit in counting the waves and therefore they were fined. In this way he obtained a lakh of rupees and then went to [Ali Mardan Khan] saying there were one lakh of waves.' pp. 50–1

[42]This account is taken from *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, ed. Chand Narain Raina Shauq (1931–4), Vol. I, pp. 397–412; and Fauq, *Tarikh-i-Aquam-i-Kashmir*, p. 61.

[43]Jia Lal Kaul Kilam, *History of the Kashmiri Pandit*, 1954.

[44]Pran Nath Jalali, unpublished manuscript history of the Dhar family.

[45]Shah Nawaz Khan, *Maathir ul Umara*, Vol. I, p. 543.

Although later historians deny that Chander Bhan 'Brahmin' was a Kashmiri Pandit, the community claims him as its own. His life, as presented in the *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir* is similar to that of Dhar. Chander Bhan's family is believed to have left Kashmir during the reign of Sikander and proceeded to Agra.[46] Either Chander Bhan or his father moved to Lahore, where Chander Bhan served as *munshi* in Dara Shukoh's offices. Following the death of his employer, Chander Bhan went to Varanasi, a convenient place of refuge for a Hindu whenever the situation at court was uncertain. He remained in Varanasi until his own death.

Dara Shukoh seemed to have provided positions for several Pandits.[47] Both in his life and his ideal image, Dara Shukoh approached Kashmiri Pandit sympathies. The prince dwelt for extended periods of time in Kashmir (in 1640, 1645, and 1654) and held extensive fiefs in the province. The saints and sufis of the valley purportedly influenced the Mughal's spiritual development: several of his 'revelations' occurred in Kashmir and it was there that he composed his religious treatises. He was in contact with Shaikh Mohsin Fani, the author of the *Dabistan-i-Mahazab*, who resided in the valley for much of his life and shared with Dara Shukoh a belief in the universal truth of all religions. The prince was also the disciple of Mulla Shah Kashmiri, another advocate of cross-communal tolerance. When Dara Shukoh translated the Upanishads into Persian, a characteristic undertaking, he employed several Kashmiri Pandits to assist him. One was Janardhan Zutshi.[48]

The literature on the Mughal empire in the first half of the seventeenth century yields the names of few other Pandits. S. Abdullah maintained that the ancestors of Raja Dina Nath Madan entered imperial service during the reign of Shah Jahan as part of a steady stream of migrants drawn by the need of the state for individuals fluent in Persian but their actual identity is unknown.[49] The evidence is scattered. The *panda's* book in Kurukshetra bears the inscription of one migrating Pandit who wrote that he had

[46] *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. I. pp. 112–13.

[47] The account below is taken from K. R. Qanungo, *Dara Shukoh* (Calcutta, 1935).

[48] Interview with H. M. Zutshi, Delhi, March 1979. The family still possesses fragments in beautiful calligraphy of the translation.

[49] S. Abdullah, *Adabiyat Farsi Men Hinduon ka Qissa* (Delhi, 1942), pp. 10–11.

come in search of a livelihood.[50] A second, this in Allahabad, records the passage of another Kashmiri on his way to Bengal as part of the Mughal army.[51]

The occupational surnames the Pandits adopted further testify to the establishment of service linkages with the Mughals. There are families who were originally Gurtoos and acquired the title Bahadur as a result of service in the imperial forces.[52] Similarly, the Bakhshis were originally Kauls who ceased to use that surname after they were appointed to positions in the treasury.[53] Other Kauls became Nigari Kauls after ancestral association with the *naqqar khana*.[54] Surnames frequently reflect incidents as well as functions. One branch of the Dhar family adopted the surname Shah when a member of the family was awarded a *khilat* for his performance at an imperial *mushaira* and the sovereign remarked that the performer looked like a Shah.[55] The surname Sapru is said to refer to fluency in Persian, being derived from 'Farsi ka sabiq para' or a Persian lesson well done.[56]

It was only in the years following Aurangzeb's death in 1707 that the number of Pandits leaving the valley became significant. Although symptomatic more of a lack of central control than implementation of central directives, discriminatory policies were adopted by several of the provincial governors in the first half of the eighteenth century; policies which led to the migration of several families. Under Farrukhsiyar (1713–19) and Muhammad Shah (1719–49), the Kashmiri presence at the centre therefore grew even as the boundaries of the empire shrank.

Communal tension and severe famine marked the second decade of the century in Kashmir. Inayatullah Khan Kashmiri,

[50]Interview with S. N. Katju, Allahabad, April 1979.
[51]Interview with J. L. Kitchloo, Delhi, August 1979.
[52]Interview with J. N. Bahadur, Delhi, July 1979.
[53]Interview with P. N. Bakhshi, Allahabad, May 1979.
[54]Fauq, *Tarikh i Aquam i Kashmir*, p. 36.
[55]Rama Rau, *Memoirs*, p. 7.
[56]Abdullah, *Adabiyat Farsi*, p. 10. While the surnames often reveal something of the past, the converse may be equally true; a surname can effectively conceal the past. As one informant observed, 'We all became Kauls when we arrived in the plains.' Many surnames listed in Fauq's study of the Brahmanical groups of Kashmir are no longer found—particularly those testifying to humble occupations.

who had espoused a discriminatory policy in Delhi, was appointed governor of the province in 1717. He remained in the capital but his deputy, Mulla Abdul Nabi, or Murtavi Khan, presided over a period of sectarian politics in Kashmir.

> As misfortunes and the disorganized state of sovereignty gave rise to outbreaks of presumption and disorder that mischief maker led away the base and foolish of the city by theological questions and made adherents . . .The rules of law about zimmis such as forbidding them to ride horses or wear arms were enforced. They answered. . . .How could new rules be introduced without orders from the sovereign? Then the unjust fellow set fire to the Hindu quarter and destroyed the Hindus. Whoever he caught he dishonoured.[57]

Until Abdul Samad Khan was made governor in 1723, the Pandits were unable to wear turbans or their caste mark. But the respite was of brief duration even then; treatment of Hindus was even worse under Abu Barakat Khan a few years later.

Among the newcomers to Delhi in the early years of the eighteenth century was the first Nehru. The family dates its arrival in the plains to 1716, the year Farrukhsiyar met Raj Kaul, the great-great-grandfather of Motilal Nehru, while in Srinagar, and invited him to the plains. In a letter sent to Motilal Nehru by his elder brother Bansi Dhar, Raj Kaul was described as a great scholar of Persian and Sanskrit who was employed as an *ustaad* or tutor to members of the emperor's family.[58] Raj Kaul was given extensive *jagirs* along one of Delhi's canals (*nehr* in Persian) and took Nehr-Kaul as his surname. Two generations later the *jagirs* had dwindled into nominal rights held by Pandit Mausa Ram and his brother Sahib Ram, but the family remained in Delhi until the 1857 Rising.[59]

The Dattatreya branch of the Kaul family also came to Delhi at this time, albeit by a more circuitous route. The Dattatreyas claim direct descent from the scholar Atri, whose son Dattatreya is

[57]Shah Nawaz Khan, *Maathir ul Umara*, Vol. I, p. 552.

[58]Taken from Bansi Dhar Nehru, *A Short History of the Nehru Family* (Delhi, Moti Lal Nehru Collection, Nehru Memorial Library).

[59]Service with the Mughals also characterized the maternal side; Jawaharlal's great-grandfather was diwan to the Begum Samru; his son, Shanker Nath Zutshi, was a litterateur in Delhi.

regarded as the founder of the *gotra*.[60] Dattatreya was believed to have travelled widely in India; Fauq alluded to places in central India associated with the *rishi's* son and mentioned a group of Saraswat Brahmans in Maharasthra who claim their ancestors came from Kashmir in the distant past.[61]

Another arrival at court was Jai Ram Bhan who was made a *raja* by Muhammad Shah. His success is recounted in legendary fashion in several community histories, and is noteworthy less for its accuracy than for its expression of the attraction the city of Delhi exercised over the imaginations of the Pandits of Kashmir. Jai Ram's widowed mother, according to the story, was an impoverished Panditani, employed in the home of a Jotishi as a water carrier. This Jotishi one day predicted that Jai Ram would become a 'big personage', whereupon the Pandit set out for the plains. He paused at the Rajauri Pass, near the Raja's palace, for a nap and was noticed by the ruler with a snake hovering by his head, protecting him from the sun while he slept (in a manner that is reminiscent of the snakes' sheltering the Buddha). Having reached the capital the migrant stationed himself at the entrance to the Mughal's palace and recorded those entering and leaving. When a courtesan was declared missing one day, Jai Ram was able to consult his tables and declare, correctly, that the woman must still be within the confines of the palace. The Mughal, impressed by the sagacity of the Pandit, employed him at once. Jai Ram, filial as well as wise, promptly dispatched a gold palanquin to Kashmir for his mother and wife and the two joined him in the plains.[62]

The Pandit's passage to the plains was mythic, all nature co-operated in the effort to send the Kashmiri safely on his way. Yet when Jai Ram arrived in Delhi, it was simply by his wits that he succeeded, by the cleverness and practical intelligence which the Kashmiris are believed to possess in abundance.

Once at court Jai Ram reputedly asked that the Pandits be

[60]Kaul, *The Kashmiri Pandit*, pp. 23–7 contain a mythic account of the first Dattatreya.

[61]Fauq, *Tarikh-i-Aquam*, pp. 81–3.

[62]There is a curious twist to the tale. It is said that the two women were escorted by the foster brother of Jai Ram's wife, Barakat Lon, who then took the name Abul Barkat Khan and was made Governor of Kashmir. There is no mention of conversion to explain this change; however, this Governor of Kashmir was a historical figure.

addressed as 'pandit' rather than '*khuajah*'—the term previously employed,[63] to which the emperor Muhammad Shah gave his assent.

There are two possible explanations for this request. The first assumes that 'khuajah' is a term of respect, albeit one normally applied to Muslims. If this is the relevant interpretation then it would seem that Jai Ram was anxious to differentiate the Kashmiri Pandits from the Kashmiri Muslims, to assert his identity as a Brahman. It is also possible, however, for 'khuajah' to denote a eunuch, in which case the appellation would have a pejorative conotation.

At this time the Kashmiri Muslim presence at court was rapidly growing.[64] It seems more probable, therefore, that Jai Ram was anxious to set the Pandits off from these Muslims, especially since many were converts.[65] Presumably relations between the two groups were strained, especially if a convert was given more rapid promotions. This did not automatically follow, however; in his categorization of the groups at court, Irvine places the Kashmiri Muslims in the company of the clerical Hindu groups. Thus the Kashmiri Muslims may well have found themselves competing with the Hindus. Whatever the reason, Jai Ram's request indicates that under the later Mughals, the Kashmiri Brahmans at the capital constituted a distinct and self-conscious group whose identity was given official recognition by the emperor.

In any event the pace of imperial disintegration quickened during the largely ceremonial reigns of Ahmad Shah (1748–54), Alamgir II (1754–59) and Shah Alam II (1759–1806). The rule of the Mughals over Kashmir was terminated rather abruptly when the deputy governor, Momin Muqim Kanth, summoned Ahmad Shah Durrani, the ruler of Afghanistan, to support him against the rebel, self-declared governor, Abul Qasim Khan. In 1752, Kashmir was annexed by the Afghan. Kashmir was more a tributary than an integrated part of Afghanistan. Direct control was nominal, the concern of Kabul extending only to the treasury. A

[63] *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmiri*, Vol. I, p. 264.

[64] Athar Ali, *The Mughal Nobility*, p. 22.

[65] Abdullah, *Adabiyat Farsi* pp. 85–6. Typical of the converts was Muhammad Aslam Salim (d. 1718) a Pandit convert and a respected figure in the court of Shah Alam I (Bahadur Shah, 1707-12), for his sufistic poetry and his *masnavi* honouring his imperial patron.

few Kashmiri Pandits were the instruments of the Afghans and the majority were their victims.

Members of both the Dhar and the Tikoo family occupied high positions in the Afghan administration and participated in the factional struggles of the later eighteenth century as their wealth made them both useful allies and obvious targets. Both Dhars and Tikkoos were engaged in a tug-of-war with the governors of Kashmir for their failure to remit revenues to the Kabul treasury.[66]

It was not only the most prominent Pandit families who seemed to have a stake in the revenue process, however. The Kashmiri Pandits were so well entrenched in the revenue administration that Mir Hazar Khan attempted to shut down the departments entirely when he was governor in 1793 as the only way to eliminate the Pandits, and forbid them to study Persian.[67] Abdullah Khan Alokzai (1795–1806) tried, with equal lack of success, to eject both the administration and those who staffed it.[68]

Troubled conditions in Kashmir led numerous Pandits to migrate. Kaul quotes a couplet (referring to Mir Muqim Kanth 'an extreme figure of terror to the pandits') expressing the sentiments of the time:

> O heart, there is fear and dread in this city
> Prepare for journey
> Disorder is dominant (Muqim) in this city.[69]

Some of the worst excesses of the Afghan period have passed into the legendary history of the community, losing their actual historical moorings in the process.[70] Rather than representing these excesses as the specific episodes of a limited time of Afghan dominion, incidents of persecution have been made the building

[66]For more about the Tikoo family and the Dhar family see Anand Kaul, *The Kashmiri Pandit*, p. 58 and Fauq, *Tarikh-i-Aquam*, pp. 73 and 92.

[67]R. K. Parmu, *The History of Muslim Rule in India* (Delhi, 1969), p. 370.

[68]Ibid., p. 371. Parmu refers to one Sahaz Ram Sapru, a revenue collector under Azim Khan who spent the funds he collected on his daughter's marriage. When discovered Sahaz Ram was given the choice of death or conversion. He chose to become a convert, and then moved with his family to Sialkot, where his grandson Muhammad Iqbal was born.

[69]Kaul, *The Kashmiri Pandit*, p. 53.

[70]Ibid., p. 57.

blocks in the construction of a past purportedly blackened by centuries of uninterrupted Muslim oppression.[71]

Later historians tended to over-generalize and over-dramatize this period of Kashmir's history. In his review of the time, Lawrence conveys more what was remembered than what occurred. Of Azad Khan, the authority on the valley wrote:

> It was his practice to tie up the Pandits two and two in grass sacks and sink them in Dal lake. As an amusement, a pitcher of ordure would be placed on a Pandit's head and Mussulmans would pelt the pitcher until it broke, the unfortunate Hindu being blinded with filth. In those days any Mussulman who met a pandit would jump on his back and take a ride saying, 'You are a Brahmin (Bhatta) and I will mount you.'[72]

Villages were frequently the first refuge of the Pandit residents of Srinagar. But here too they were vulnerable and many decided to depart Kashmir altogether. Not all went to Hindusthan. Not all were Pandits; Kashmiri Muslims fled as well.

Scattered all over the hill states and the small principalities of the Hindu Kush are enclaves of Kashmiris whose colonies were established in Afghan times; human fallout of the violent impact of the Durranis. In Gilgit, for example, there are 'a great number of Kashmiris whose forefathers settled here in the time of Abdul

[71]Haji Karim Dad Khan, it is recalled, once capriciously accused several Pandits of murdering two Muslims. He tormented them for hours with the smoke of a cow-dung fire before releasing them in exchange for an annual levy of 50,000 rupees which became known in the community as *zar-i-dad* (smoke money). The term has become a codeword for the suffering endured by the community. Another Governor, Mir Hazar Khan, is said to have drowned so many Kashmiri Brahmans in Dal Lake that the weight of their sacred threads amounted to *maunds*.—Ibid., p. 58.

[72]Lawrence, *Valley*, pp. 197–8. R. C. Kak describes one village which obtained respite. Siva Ram Kaul Jalali (most Jalalis among the Pandits were Kauls who acquired the Jalali surname by serving the Afghans) was the *kardar* of Barriangan. Once when he was delivering grain to the revenue collector he watched a peasant shake the dust off his clothes and mused over the fact that not even the dust of what the peasant grew was allowed to remain with him. The *kardar* then broke his *qalamdan* and retired to a nearby cave. When the Afghans arrived, they decided to confiscate the *jagir* that had been presented to the former official but as soon as the messenger reached the cave he fainted. Impressed, the Afghan governor confirmed the grant and announced that any Hindu in the village would be exempt from payment of the *jizya*. R. C. Kak, *Memoirs of the Archeological Survey of Kashmir, Antiquities of Marev-Wadwan* (reprint Delhi, 1971), pp. 6–7.

Shah Durrani and and who form the largest section of the population,"[73] and 'in Hodar [in the Indus Valley], there is a small settlement of Kashmiri refugees who fled from the severity of Pathan rule,"[74] as well. Many Pandits fled to the hill states, several surfaced as ministers in Kangra and Chamba in the later years of the eighteenth century.

The collective memory of the community has preserved the events of the Afghan period in somewhat distorted form, recalling the suffering as an exclusive experience, directed only at the Pandits of Kashmir. The Pandits did not recall their difficulties as a way of encouraging fortitude at often uncertain times. Rather these difficulties were recited to establish their credentials with other Hindus and to justify communalism at a time when cross-communal tolerance was considered impossible and undesireable.

[73]J. Biddulph, *Tribes of the Hindu Kush* (Calcutta, 1880), p. 39.
[74]Ibid., p. 14.

CHAPTER IV

# Kashmiri Pandits in Avadh

Although it is difficult to trace the path of migrating Pandits, they seem to have gone to Delhi first. If they were unable to find employment in the Mughal capital, they generally went further east, to the court of the Nawab of Avadh or to the smaller states of north and central India. Alternatively, a number of Pandits went directly to Banaras, finding the rationale and consolation for departure in the good *karma* acquired by pilgrimage.

The pilgrimage network has long been recognized as one of the most crucial links tying the diverse regions of India. Kashmir was incorporated in the Indian pilgrimage network from an early period. In the *Rajatarangini* there are numerous references to Banaras, while Kaul claimed that in Banaras, the sacred thread investiture ceremony includes a ritualistic seven pace walk in the direction of Kashmir.[1] According to Bamzai, furthermore, Kashmiri pilgrims are exempt from payment of a tax when they travel to Gaya.[2]

The role of pilgrimage places as a final destination for migrants has not attracted much attention. But for Kashmiris during Afghan times, these sacred places provided a known permanent stopping point. Thus the great-great-grandfather of Raja Narendra Nath, Kishen Das, walked down to Banaras from Kashmir and became a priest in a temple along the Ganges at the end of the eighteenth century.[3] Fateh Chand Ogra, whose descendants were to fare well under both the Nawabs and the British, also arrived in Banaras at this time.[4]

Migrants who selected sacred places as their settling points were

[1]Kaul, *The Kashmiri Pandit*, p. 28.
[2]P. M. K. Bamzai, *History of Kashmir* (Delhi, 1962), p. 232.
[3]Interview with Diwan Anand Kumar, Delhi, March 1979.
[4]Interview with Janak Dulari Kaul, Allahabad, May 1979.

of the less well-connected *guru* section of the community. But when possible, they swiftly abandoned the *mandir* for the *darbar*. One important consequence of migration within the community was thus that it seemed to facilitate the transformation of Purohit pandits into the secular *karkun* group and from sacred to secular service. Kishen Das went from the temple along the Ganges to the fort along the Jamuna and ended up at the Mughal court.[5]

Conversely, *karkun* pandits lacking connections in the plains found members of their *guru*'s family previously established in the cities of north India to be useful dispensers of information. When the first Handoos arrived in Delhi, for example, they were assisted by a relative of the family purohit in Kashmir.[6]

Generally, material rather than religious considerations dictated choice of ultimate venue for the migrating Kashmiris. Only a few families settled permanently in Banaras and those located in Faizabad were influenced less by the proximity of Rama's capital at Ajodhia than they were by that of the *nawab's* court.

Although Delhi had exercised a magnetic effect on Kashmiri Pandits, from 1739, when Nadir Shah's forces devastated the capital, to 1803, the date the English imposed the Pax Britannica on the city following Wellesley's defeat of the Marathas, Delhi was the object of a series of incursions and bloodbaths. The colony of Kashmiri Pandits was largely concentrated in a narrow lane winding northwest from Turkoman Gate toward Churi Bazar and the Fatepuri Masjid. The area was known as Sita Ram Bazar and it was from the confines of this world that the Kashmiris dispersed, particularly to the east. While there was so much turbulence in Delhi, neighbouring Avadh was experiencing exceptional prosperity. As the imperial system disintegrated, the provincial capitals flourished as centres of Mughal culture, and independent of Mughal political control.

Following the death of Shuja ud-Daulah, son of the first independent ruler of Avadh, in 1775, his son, Asaf ud-Daulah, transferred the capital of the province from Faizabad to Lucknow in an attempt to distance himself from the grasp of his mother, the Bahu Begum. There the seat of government remained for seventy-five years, an increasingly eroded island of Indo-Persian cultural

[5]Interview with Diwan Anand Kumar.
[6]Interview with Gopi Kishen Handoo, Delhi, August 1979.

forms. As these cultural forms were the norm with which the Kashmiri Pandits identified and as mastery of these forms was the source of their mobility, it is worth inquiring further into their substance.

In the words of Satish Chandra, 'The cultural importance of the Mughal empire increased as its political importance diminished. Provincial courts reflected and then replaced the imperial capital as a "school of manners" for the entire polite society.'[7] Nowhere was this more evident then in Avadh. The Nawabs, like their imperial counterparts, associated with indigenous culture and recruited representatives from it to be part of a ruling group.

Political stability was based partly upon the composite nature of this group. Asaf.ud-Daulah, like most of the Mughals, 'used to associate freely with Hindus. [At Hindu festivals] he used to give public entertainments and spend large sums of money.'[8] This sort of gesture made it possible for Hindus to accept the sovereignty of a Muslim and to serve him.[9] The Nawabs imitated, perpetuated, and extended the Mughal achievement.[10]

The weakness of the system lay in the discontinuity between this imperial and provincial court culture and the rest of society. Thomas Metcalf describes this discontinuity best: 'Despite its Islamic character, Lucknow culture was not markedly antagonistic towards Hindus. The nawabs participated in the great Hindu festivals, even supporting the construction of temples and employed Hindus as senior officials and bankers. Hindus, in turn, joined Muharram celebrations and cultivated Urdu literature. [But] the hold of this culture did not extend beyond the environs of the capital. . . . In the countryside, outside the qasba towns and the estates of the Muslim landholders, traditional Hindu values held sway.'[11]

The indigenous element in the Indo-Islamicate formula that

[7]Satish Chandra, *Politics and Parties*, pp. 183–4.

[8]Muhammad Faiz Baksh, *Tarikh-i-Farah Bakhsh*, trans. W. Hoey as *Memoirs of Delhi and Faizabad* (Allahabad, 1888), pp. 231-2.

[9]Muhammad Faiz Baksh even refers to a Brahman employee of the court who received his appointment through an uncle who had converted to Islam. Baksh, *Tarikh-i-Farah Bakhsh*, p. 236.

[10]For further discussion, see Richard Barnett, 'Muslim Dominance, Ethnicity and Redistribution in Early Modern South Asia' (Ph.D thesis, 1978).

[11]Thomas R. Metcalf, *Land, Landlords and the British Raj, Northern India in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley, 1979), pp. 37–8.

shaped the *nawabi* regime at Faizabad and Lucknow was more marked than in the imperial administration, for the provincial system was more dependent on local collaborators than was its imperial predecessor. Recruitment was, of necessity, relatively more open to the local population. Barnett concludes that the policy of the *nawabs* went beyond mere co-option of non-Muslims to their open welcome. 'The customary presence of clerical castes in the administration was accompanied by non-Muslim participation in the coercive arm of the state. No longer did a Central Asian, Irani and Afghani warrior elite predominate; revenue contractors, record keepers, and bankers had taken their place.'[12] Furthermore, more modest ambitions regarding centralization meant greater power for subordinates. The *nawabs* pursued a generous policy, sharing more among greater numbers, both in the system of administration and the distribution of resources. Barnett found the revenue system to have been shaped by a 'deliberate decision to allow the surplus to remain at lower levels,' to facilitate collection of revenue and to redistribute it to a more extended, heterogenous elite.[13]

The revenue collectors, known as *nazms* or *chakladars*, were, according to a later description 'reared at court, and were incapacitated by their education from understanding the society over which they were placed. They neither knew nor cared whether they were mild or oppressive so long as they could remit sufficient sums to save themselves from disgrace at headquarters and realize enough to provide for themselves and their retinues of needy dependents.'[14]

The system evidently offered great opportunities for rapid social mobility. According to Metcalf, many individuals not previously established in the court were drawn to it. Among these were several Kashmiri families.

In addition, artisans and scholars flocked thither from Dacca, Bengal, Gujarat, Malwa, Hyderabad, Shahjahanabad, Lahore, Peshawar, Kabul, Kashmir and Multan.[15] Shuja ud-Daulah actively encouraged this migration and assigned incoming military

[12]Barnett, 'Muslim Dominance', p. 21.
[13]Ibid., p. 14. [14]Gazetteer of Oudh, 1877, p. IV.
[15]Muhammad Faiz Baksh, *Tarikh-i-Farah Baksh*.

and civil officers plots according to their status in the city.[16] Similarly, when Asaf ud-Daulah re-established the capital in Lucknow, he 'spent so much money nobody could help being attracted to his court.'[17]

The Kashmiri Pandits were part of the general exodus from Delhi of 'all the great and distinguished men of the most refined social classes who congregated in Lucknow.'[18] Residents of Delhi were made especially welcome by the Bahu Begum, the adopted daughter of Muhammad Shah, and wife of Asaf ud-Daulah, both of whom were originally from the Mughal capital.[19] Bahu Begum supported at least one Kashmiri, Mehtab Rai. Mehtab Rai's descendants received a stipend from the *nawabs* for several generations.[20]

The skills the Kashmiris had acquired both under the Sultanate in Kashmir and the Mughals in Delhi were useful in other contexts. Their loyalty was purely instrumental; there were no ties of kinship or sympathy.

Kashmiri Pandits, as traditional administrative servants, arrived in Avadh in search of an administrative structure to staff, both from Kashmir itself and from north India. Members of the Ghumkhuar family,[21] the Haksar family,[22] and the Kochak family[23] were descendants of traditional employees of the Mughal court. Others, including the Taiminis,[24] the Bakshis,[25] and the Mullas,[26] arrived from Kashmir itself.

The significance of literary grace in securing both livelihood and repute for the Pandits is indicated by the fact that the best sources for information about them during pre-British times are the *tazkirahs*, the compilations of biographies of the poets. The overwhelming majority of those included in the *tazkirahs* are Muslims,

[16]Abdul Halim Sharar, *Hindustan men Mashriqi Tamaddun ka Akhiri Namun* (Lucknow, Last Phase of an Oriental Culture), trans. E. S. Harcourt and Fakhir Hussain (London, 1975), p. 31.

[17]Ibid., p. 31. [18]Ibid., p. 58.

[19]R. B. Saksena, *History of Urdu Literature* (Allahabad, 1927), p. 174.

[20]Interview with O. N. Sharga, Allahabad, May 1979.

[21]*Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. I, p. 397.

[22]Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 447. [23]Ibid., p. 825.

[24]Interview with J. P. Taimini; Delhi, August 1979.

[25]Interview with P. N. Bakshi, Allahabad, May 1979.

[26]Interview with S. N. Mulla, Allahabad, April 1979 and A. N. Mulla, Delhi, August 1979.

but of the Hindus, a sizeable number are Kashmiris, a proportion which is especially impressive given the small size of the community when compared to other Hindu groups, such as the Kayasthas and the Khattris, included in the biographical dictionaries.

No north Indian court was considered complete without a contingent of poets, for whose presence there was much competition. The most admired poets had circles of disciples. These frequently included the ruler and many of his nobles. But they were open to less aristocratic disciples as well; and the relative accessibility of the court poets provided an opportunity for Kashmiris to form useful connections by capitalizing on their fluency in Persian. Thus, all the most prominent poets of the nawab's court included Kashmiris among their disciples. Lachmi Ram 'Fida', one of the earliest arrivals in Lucknow, enrolled himself as the student of Sauda.[27] Kishen Chani 'Majruh', another transplanted resident of Delhi who arrived in Lucknow during the reign of Asaf ud-Daulah, was a disciple of Jan Jahan 'Mazhar'.[28] His son, Ganga Prasad 'Rind' was a pupil of Jurat[29] as was Ajudhia Prasad Gurtoo 'Hairat' (1793–1818).[30]

The poet Amanat (1815–58) gathered about himself the largest contingent of Kashmiris in later years. These included Kadar Nath 'Farhat' (the son of Basti Ram 'Dakhani'),[31] Debi Prasad 'Farqat',[32] son of Thakur Prasad, Dina Nath 'Johar',[33] Bas Karan or Nathuji 'Muruwat',[34] Ganga Prasad 'Rind', son of Moti Lal,[35] and Nazm Shiv Prasad, son of Nanak Chand.[36]

The Pandits joined in the habitual pastime of the literate, penning obsequious *masnavis* designed to secure the favour of a flattered ruler. Of Pandit Daya Dan, the *tazkira* notes in a typical entry, 'a Kashmiri pandit of Delhi who is mostly present at the *mushairas* of the Maharaja.'[37]

[27]Sprengler, *A Catalogue of Arabic, Persian and Hindusthani Manuscripts*, p. 225.

[28]Ibid., p. 254. [29]Ibid., p. 282.

[30]J. H. Garcin de Tassy, *Histoire de la Litterature Hindouie et Hindoustanie* (Paris, 1874), Vol. I, p. 558.

[31]*Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. 2, p. 81.

[32]Ibid. [33]Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 96.

[34]de Tassy, *Histoire*, Vol. II, p. 394.

[35]*Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. 1, p. 355.

[36]Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 470.

[37]Sprengler, *Arabic, Persian and Hindusthani Manuscripts*, p. 225.

The *takhallus* selected by its bearer or his *ustaad* further testified to claims on a potential patron. Thus the Kashmiri Raja Ram Nath chose the appellation *Zarra*, which means ray of sunlight to complement the *takhallus Aftab* or sun of Shah Alam.[38] Many others either hopefully or explicitly, selected for their *takhallus ghulam* or slave. However, only one Kashmiri inhabitant of *nawabi* Lucknow was considered to have produced exceptional literature. This was Daya Shanker Kaul 'Nasim' (1811–43), the son of Ganga Prasad.[39]

Lack of information makes it difficult to do more than catalogue the names of the arrivals and their association with the court, an association which was made possible by their exceptional fluency in Persian. Several Pandits gravitated to Faizabad while Shuja ud-Daulah presided over the city.[40] It is unclear, however, what, if any, connections might have existed among them.

Other families residing in Lucknow in the early nineteenth century carried on the scholarship which marked the Pandits both in Kashmir and on the plains. Som Nath Mubai 'Bekhud', the son of Sangam Lal, for example, gained employment as a scholar of Arabic and Persian at the Farangi Mahal and was then appointed *tehsildar*.[41]

A significant number of the Pandits coming from Kashmir itself arrived in Avadh during the reign of Asaf ud-Daulah. Many came from the village of Shivpuri, near Srinagar. Among them were the forefathers of many Pandits who were to be prominent in the later history of the province. These families included the Mullas,[42] the Saprus,[43] the Shivpuris,[44] the Kitchloos[45] and the Taiminis.[46]

The wide variety of factors inducing migration from even the same locality is evident in a survey of those arrivals from Shivpuri. Kripa Ram Kitchloo was forced to leave the valley after a quarrel with a government official over the accidental killing of a goat.[47]

[38]Sprengler, citing Qasim, p. 222.
[39]Saksena, *History of Urdu Literature*, p. 144.
[40]*Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. 1, pp. 245, 447, 529; Vol. 2, p. 38.
[41]Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 825.
[42]Interview with Anand Narain Mulla, Delhi, August 1979.
[43]Interview with A. P. Sapru, Delhi, August 1979.
[44]Interview with H. N. Shivpuri, Lucknow, May 1979; and Fauq, *Tarikh-i-Aquam-i-Kashmir*, p. 37.
[45]Interview with S. N. Kitchloo, Lucknow, May 1979.
[46]Interview with J. P. Taimini, Delhi, August 1979.
[47]Interview with Kitchloo, Lucknow, May 1979.

Aftab Rai and his son, Baij Nath Gurtoo, were said by a descendant to have been motivated by ambitions possibly aroused by the luck of those who had gone before.[48] Baij Nath eventually gained an appointment in the treasury.[49]

Sita Ram Mulla seems to have emigrated out of a similar restlessness; he wandered as far as Calcutta in search of lucrative employment. Sita Ram's son, Lakshmi Narain, returned to Avadh and served in the *nawabi* administration, as did his son, Kali Sahai.[50] Datta Ram Kaul and his son Daya Nidhan Kaul Bakshi likewise went to Calcutta but eventually settled in Lucknow;[51] Bishen Narain Kaul Bakshi was appointed to the Treasury under Wajid Ali Shah.[52]

Generally the Kashmiri community did not receive appointments to the highest ranks of the state bureaucracy. Still, the community increased steadily in size, its success characterized more by a large number of middling positions than a few elevated ones.

One of the few Kashmiri families to achieve prominence, or more accurately, notoriety, was a Kaul family whose base lay outside the capital in Tandiaon, Gopamau.[53]

Upon obtaining power in Avadh in 1798, Saadat Ali Khan discovered that the revenue being remitted from several of the *parganas* of the Hardoi district had declined. He then farmed the area to one Bakht Mal Kaul, whose family had been summoned to the province by his predecessor, Asaf ud-Daulah.[54] Rai Bakht Mal had a fort built at Tandiaon, control of which passed on to his brother Dila Ram in 1828. Dila Ram then added a Shivwalla, a grove and a well to the enclave.[55] Upon Dila Ram's death, the *chakla* passed on to his adopted son, Shiv Nath Singh.[56]

According to Sleeman, Shiv Nath was 'a highly respectable and

[48]Ibid.

[49]Abu Talib, *Tafzihul Ghafillin* (1797) trans. and ed. Abid Reza Bidar (Rampur, 1961), p. 71.

[50]Interview with A. N. Mulla, Delhi, August 1979.

[51]Interview with P. N. Bakshi, Allahabad, April 1979.

[52]G. D. Bhatnagar, *Avadh under Wajid Ali Shah* (Banaras, 1968), p. 162. Another son of Data Ram Kaul Bakshi was made Dewan to Sujan Ali Khan, *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. 1, pp. 303 and 501.

[53]*Oudh Gazette*, 1877, Vol. 3, p. 307.

[54]Interview with A. N. Kaul, Lucknow, May 1979.

[55]*Oudh Gazette*, 1877, Vol. 1, p. 580.

[56]Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 67.

amiable man but very delicate in health and, in consequence, deficient in the vigour required to manage so turbulent a district. He has however a deputy in Kedar Nath, a relative who has all the ability, vigour and energy required . . . he was deputy under Dila Ram for many years and is a man of great intelligence and experience.' Another British officer, however, was less impressed. The Gazette quoted one Mr McMinn who refers to 'the desolate quarters of bare rain-washed walls which represent the old cots of the peasantry that fled from Kedar Nath and his Kashmiri brethren. The Thakurs were much oppressed in the time of Kedar Nath, whom, however, they always mention with respect.'[57] Kedar Nath apparently found that being a Brahman was a source of great utility, and exploited his status in the execution of his duties. 'Being a Brahmin, though of low caste and a smoker of the hukka, he used to visit villages which had not paid up and place himself at the *lambardhar's* door in dharna, vowing neither to eat nor drink until the rupees were forthcoming. . . . He was a man of conscience, however, and refused bribes and presents.'[58] Shiv Nath held the *chakla* at annexation. Because he managed to satisfy the British that he was loyal in 1857, he was able to exchange his *chakla* for an estate in Unao and became the only Kashmiri Brahman *taluqdar*.[59]

Most Pandits seemed to have found employment in either the *nawabi* establishment or in households of the city's nobility. An exception to this pattern was the Taimini family, one of the few to have engaged in trade.

The lack of Kashmiri Brahman families so engaged is puzzling. The artisans of the valley produced many luxury items destined for the courts of north India. The trade, which included carpets, shawls, silks and saffron, was a lucrative one. Kashmiri merchants were frequently mentioned in eighteenth and nineteenth century chronicles, but they were invariably Muslims. They were by no means illiterate; Kashmiri merchants frequently participated in *mushairas* in Delhi and Lucknow, according to the *tazkiras*. Fauq noted, among Kashmiri Pandit surnames, 'wani', which means merchant, but pointed out that no Pandit currently bore that surname.[60]

[57]Sleeman, Tour II, quoted in *Gazette*, Vol. I, p. 580.
[58]*Oudh Gazette*, Vol. 3, p. 307. [59]*Unao District Gazetteer*, Appendix.
[60]Fauq, *Tarikh-i-Aquam-i-Kashmir*, p. 24.

Prior to their departure from the village of Shivpuri in Kashmir the Taiminis were in the silk business. Presumably attracted by the trade in luxury articles centered at the court, Mansa Ram Taimini moved his silk business to Lucknow during Asaf ud-Daulah's time. Mansa Ram settled in Chaupation, the neighbourhood bordering Kashmiri Muhalla.[61] There he established a shop known as *Resham ki Kothi*, which he passed on to his son, Durga Prasad, at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Durga Prasad had two sons, Ajodhia Prasad and Ganga Prasad, both of them born in the 1830s. Neither became silk merchants. Ajodhia Prasad became a *vakil* and moved to Hardoi, Ganga Prasad became a *mukhtar*. The two did not live jointly and eventually the brothers sold the property at Chaupation.

Ganga Prasad travelled extensively through the Lucknow and Hardoi districts in connection with his *mukhtarship*, acquiring enough contacts, information, and money in the process to invest in rural property, ultimately purchasing a total of nine villages in the two districts.[62] By the time he died, Ganga Prasad had moved far from his mercantile roots. With capital raised through the sale of the silk business initially and then through his *mukhtarship*, he was able to transform himself into something of a rural magnate, patronizing the construction of a Shiv *mandir* in one of his villages, Bitauli.[63] His mercantile origins did not seem to prevent close contact with any of the Lucknowi Pandits. Ganga Prasad, moreover, retained especially close links with other *zamindari* families. On several occasions, members of the Taimini family married Bakshis; the Bakshis being one of the wealthiest of the landed Kashmiri families. Ganga Prasad himself married the daughter of a district and sessions judge, Suraj Narain Kaul.[64]

Although Ganga Prasad spent most of his life in the city of Lucknow, he aspired to the role of rural magnate and his values were the traditional Hindu values. He was highly orthodox in his religious practices and conservative in his social beliefs. Unlike most of the upwardly mobile Pandits of his time, Ganga Prasad knew neither Persian nor English, but he was trained sufficiently in

[61]Interview with J. P. Taimini, Delhi, August 1979.

[62]These villages remained in the family until they were sold off following passage of the Zamindari Abolition Act in 1951. Taimini interview.

[63]Interview with Raja Guru, Lucknow, May 1979.

[64]Taimini interview.

Sanskrit to follow the religious texts. He was, along with the Haksar family, one of the few to construct a temple. Most Pandits, to the chagrin of their *gurus*, saw no need to indulge in religious patronage.[65] Ganga Prasad's religious inclinations may be ascribed to two causes: his distance from the courtly culture and his need to establish credentials with the community. Those whose careers were tied to the court and those whose status within the community was more secure did not usually display such piety.

Culturally divorced from the Mughal court and its Persian and Islamicate traditions, Ganga Prasad was untouched by the circumstances and aspirations of most Kashmiris. The Taimini line never included any poets, never produced a courtier, never developed close ties with the Muslims. A figure such as Brij Mohan Lal Guhar 'Hairat' who was employed at the court as a clerk, was attracted to Sufistic doctrines, and spent most of his time in the company of *darveshes*,[66] although fairly unusual in the larger Hindu world, was far more typical of the Pandits than was his contemporary Ganga Prasad. The Taimini tradition conformed more closely to the traditional north Indian Hindu archtype than to the traditional Kashmiri Brahman image.

By the time Asaf ud-Daulah established his capital in Lucknow, there was a large contingent of Kashmiris in his service whose very presence served as a magnet for newcomers. Most of them settled in Kashmiri Muhalla,[67] said to have been established in 1782, seven years after the *nawab* arrived in his new capital. Like the Bazar Sita Ram in Delhi, the Kashmiris congregated in the older parts of the city, bordering on a neighbourhood dominated by upper-class Shia Muslims but distinguished from them by the small Shiva *mandirs* occupying modest niches among the homes. Some of the residents of Kashmiri Muhalla catered to the court; more were employed as scribes and secretaries. A larger number still were engaged in occupations that required literacy but were less remunerative; Sharar refers to the thousands of Kayasthas and the hundreds of Kashmiri Pandits who were calligraphers.[68]

In spite of the prominent role which Pandits played in the cultural life of Lucknow and the numerous mentions of Kashmiri

[65]Raja Guru interview.
[66]*Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. 1, p. 262.
[67]*The Statesman*, 5 May 1872.
[68]Sharar, *Mashriqi Tammadun*, p. 105.

litterateurs, the *Oudh Gazette* observed 'there were very few families of them inhabiting Lucknow during the nawabi. They were comparatively rarely in public service; the name of only one of them, Rai Dila Ram, is familiar as chakladar of Tandiaon.'[69]

As this passage suggests, the Kashmiris were able to disassociate themselves from the rule of the *nawabs*, at least in the eyes of the British. Because their links with the court went unnoticed by the new authorities, their loyalty need not have been subject to close scrutiny. The past obscurity of the Pandits is contrasted with their later attainments: 'Many of them are [now] among the subordinate judicial officers and other public servants . . .[and are] far more numerous at Lucknow now than in former days.[70]

[69]*Oudh Gazette*, Vol. II; pp. 375–6.
[70]Ibid.

CHAPTER V

# Kashmiris in the Lahore Darbar

The origins of Pandits at the court of Ranjit Singh in the Punjab can be more easily traced than those at the court of the Avadh nawabs. The Lahore Darbar, from the perspective of the Kashmiris, centered not on the Maharaja, but on one Ganga Ram.

Ganga Ram was the son of Kishen Das, who had walked down from Srinagar to Banaras following the establishment of the Afghan regime in Kashmir.[1] (Kishen Das had served as a priest before shifting to more secular pursuits as part of the Mughal bureaucracy.) Ganga Ram had joined Mahadji Sindhia toward the end of the eighteenth century, when the ruler of Gwalior was engaged in expanding the boundaries of his domain. (Sindhia also served intermittently as chief protector of the enfeebled Mughal Shah Alam.) The Maharaja had recruited European officers to train his military forces—a procedure foreshadowing that to be undertaken later by Ranjit Singh. Under General Perron (Pierre Cuillier—1755–1834), was Colonel Louis Burquien and it was under this colonel that Ganga Ram was placed.

According to Griffin, Ganga Ram so impressed the Colonel that 'he was entrusted with many important political affairs. When the Mahrattas overran central India, Malwa and the Delhi territories, Ganga Ram was employed in collecting tribute and drawing up treaties with subject or allied states.'[2]

According to one family tradition, Ganga Ram had promised

[1]Sir Lepel Griffin and C. F. Massey, *Chiefs and Families of Note in the Punjab*, rev. ed., *The Punjab Chiefs*, L. Conran and H. D. Craik (Lahore, 1892), p. 276.
[2]Ibid.

Warren Hastings never to oppose the English. (Hastings had had dealings with Sindhia in 1782 when the treaty of Salbai was negotiated.) Ganga Ram's descendants maintain that when Daulat Rao, Mahadji Scindia's grandnephew began his campaign against the British, Ganga Ram left Maratha service. Coming to Delhi, he purchased a house in the Bazar Sita Ram (for the then munificent sum of 1100 rupees).[3] Griffin, however, writes that it was only after Burquien (et al.) had been defeated by Lake (in 1803) that the Pandit discreetly retreated to Delhi, his home for the next ten years.[4] The British, in any event, looked with favour upon Ganga Ram. When David Ochterlony (1758–1825) was negotiating the Treaty of Lahore in 1809 formalizing relations between the British Government and the Phulkian Cis–Sutlej states of the Punjab, he was assisted by Ganga Ram. Four years later, Ranjit Singh sent two messengers from Lahore to the Bazar Sita Ram with an invitation for Ganga Ram to join the Lahore Darbar.

Amar Nath Madan, the son of Raja Dina Nath, preserved this event in his account of the reign of Ranjit Singh, the *Zafar Nama*.[5] A newsletter of 1812 detailed the interview which transpired between the Maharaja and his Pandit recruit and ended thus: 'The Noble Sarkar said some suitable work would be shortly proposed for him and asked him to remain assured at heart. The Noble Sarkar then sent Rs 500 to his camp.'[6]

At this time Ranjit Singh's civil and military administrative structures were relatively unsophisticated. The Maharaja was anxious to find officers capable of improving them, as were other indigenous rulers. Although Haidar Ali in Mysore, Madhuji Sindhia in Gwalior and Jaswant Rao Holkar had all realized the necessity of transforming traditional military technology if they were to survive, much less stave off, the British, only Ranjit Singh was able to make effective use of this knowledge. In the *Umdat ul Tawarrikh*, Sohan Lal suggests that it was on the recommendation of Holkar, made during a meeting in 1805, that the Maharaja

[3]Ibid., pp. 276–7.

[4]Interview with Dewan Anand Kumar.

[5]Amar Nath Pandit, 'Zafar Nama', in *Calcutta Review*, Vol. 31 (December 1858) trans. E. Rehatsek, as *Memoirs of the Reign of Ranjit Singh*, p. 282.

[6]'Events at the Court of Ranjit Singh 1810–1817', papers in the Poona Alienation Office, trans. Garrett and Chopra, p. 66.

began to reshape his army.[7] Previously, the preferred military unit of the Mughals, Marathas and Sikhs had been the cavalry. The Sikhs, however, promoted the development of an artillery and an infantry trained more fully in European methods of drill. The actual unit for both artillery and infantry was standardized, each composed of 900 soldiers, a *munshi* and a *mutta-saddi.*[8]

At first, according to Kohli's analysis of the pay-roll records, the infantry was unpopular. But for those willing to join the ranks, rapid upward mobility and promotion were possible. At least one indigent but resourceful Kashmiri Pandit joined the infantry as a private soldier and ended his career as a colonel.

Badri Nath Colonel was the son of Pandit Gobind Ram who left Kashmir for Lahore in the early nineteenth century. Badri Nath entered the Maharaja's service as a common private in the Khalsa army in 1821. Fourteen years later, he was a full colonel.[9]

The Sikhs themselves gravitated towards the *Ghoracharah Fauj*—the irregular cavalry. This was considered an aristocratic preserve and was composed largely of relatives and followers of the independent Sikh chiefs.[10] It was not an arm of the military upon which the Maharaja could fully rely.

The artillery was equipped with the most modern European military technology and possessed, for example, the latest in swivel guns. Ganga Ram's first assignment, according to the Poona newsletters, was in connection with this department.[11]

During the early years of the 'Noble Sarkar's' reign, as Kohli notes, the Maharaja lacked a regular state treasury and an organized record system. Business was conducted verbally and all accounts held in the hands of an Amritsar banker. Holkar apparently advised Ranjit Singh to regularize this haphazard system. But lack of capable officials was so serious that organizational reforms were not implemented until after 1808, the year Bhawani Das appeared in the Sikh capital.[12]

[7]Lala Sohan Lal Suri, *Umdat ul Tawarikh, Covering the Years 1831-1838*, trans. V. S. Suri (Delhi, 1961) quoted by Sita Ram Kohli, *Catalogue of Khalsa Darbar Records* (Lahore, 1919), p. 2.

[8]Ibid., p. 3. [9]Griffin and Massey, *Chiefs*, p. 398.

[10]Kohli, *Catalogue*, pp. 1–3.

[11]'Events at Court', p. 72.

[12]Kohli, *Catalogue*, p. 125.

Bhawani Das assigned Ganga Ram tasks in both the civil and military departments of government. Shortly after he was ordered to familiarize himself with the workings of the *zamburkhana*, he was instructed to audit accounts and ascertain the amounts due from a departmental *munshi*;[13] By 1815, the Pandit had so reorganized the entire financial operation as to make himself both informed and indispensable. 'As custodian of the official records, he practically controlled the whole administrative machinery.'[14] The variety of tasks which Ganga Ram was called upon to perform and the speed with which he insinuated himself at the apex of the administrative pyramid indicate a shortage of capable officials.

Literacy was a necessity in short supply;[15] a literate who was not a Sikh, moreover, was not at a disadvantage. 'Ranjit Singh,' notes Archer 'soon sensed that only men with no exterior allegiances, whose entire position, status and career depended upon himself could be fully trusted.'[16]

That they were outsiders became, therefore, a source of strength for the Kashmiris. Their literacy was acompanied by an additional qualification: they were familiar with the ways of the English, who sat, impatient and avaricious, just across the border.

Pandits arrived in Lahore independent of Ganga Ram, both from the plains and, more frequently, from Kashmir itself. However, Ganga Ram served as a direct magnet for a cluster of identifiable migrants. Moreover, the fact that most Kashmiris eventually gravitated towards the departments in which other Kashmiris were concentrated suggests that even if linkages did not bring them to the Punjab, they later proved beneficial.

One of the first Pandits to be summoned to Lahore by Ganga Ram was Hari Ram Kaul. Hari Ram's father, Raghunath Kaul, had gone from Kashmir to Faizabad, then the nawabi capital. From Avadh, he went to Gwalior where he was employed by Sindhia, as Mir Munshi to Colonel Burquien. Raghunath's son eventually was employed by the Frenchman as well. Following the defeat of Gwalior by the British, the two Kauls went to Lahore.[17] Upon the recommendation of Ganga Ram, Hari Ram was first

[13]'Events at Court', p. 79.
[14]Kohli, *Catalogue*, Vol. 2, p. 9.
[15]Ibid.
[16]W. Archer, *Painting of the Sikhs* (London, 1966), p. 7.
[17]Griffin and Massey, *Chiefs*, p. 363.

given an appointment in the Diwan's office. In 1817, he was promoted personal *munshi* to the Maharaja; the next year his services were transferred to the heir, Kharak Singh.[18].

By 1820, the second generation of Kashmiris at the court was well established. In 1814, Ganga Ram brought his son, Ajodhia Prasad (1800–70) from Delhi to Lahore.[19] Five years later, when Ranjit Singh placed the French generals Ventura and Allard at the head of his army (Fauj-i-Khas), Ganga Ram's son was posted with their unit. He was both paymaster and the channel of communication between the generals and the Maharaja.[20] The next year, Hari Ram brought his son, Shankar Nath (born in Delhi in 1805), to the Punjabi capital, and secured a position for him in Kharak Singh's treasury. From there Shankar Nath was transferred to the Central Records Office. There he remained until the annexation of the Punjab in 1849. Shankar Nath was the brother-in-law of Raja Dina Nath and served, as well, as the Raja's *munshi*. Both his formal position and his marital connections gave Shanker Nath considerable power. In his capacity as revenue officer in addition to his other tasks, he disposed of thousands of cases. Griffin estimated that his *jagirs* alone were worth 6500 rupees a year in income. This income was supplemented by cash allowances of 1360 rupees and 2412 rupees for his own personal establishment.[21]

Ganga Ram also brought Ganga Bishen Ghumkhuar to Lahore.[22] The fortunes of the Ghumkhuar family had been tied to the Mughal court in its heyday. Subsequently, the family's centre of gravity shifted to Avadh. Lakshmi Narain Kaul entered the service of the Burhan ul-Mulk, Saadat Ali Khan. Lakshmi Narain's son, Raja Ram 'Bahadur,' was a poet[23] and servant of Shuja ud-Daulah, while his grandson, Bhola Nath, was a *vakil* in the Company employ in Delhi. From Delhi, Bhola Nath's son, Ganga Bishen, set out to join Ganga Ram in Lahore.[24] Ganga Bishen's own son, Radha Kishen, eventually fought with the Khalsa forces. Like many of the Kashmiris in Lahore, his active career spanned the heyday of the Sikh empire and the transition of the Punjab to British rule.

[18]Ibid.
[19]Ibid. p. 278. [20]Kohli, *Catalogue*, Vol. I, p. 11.
[21]Griffin and Massey, *Chiefs*, p. 364.
[22]Fauq, *Tarikh*, p. 62. [23]Sprengler, *Catalogue*, p. 211.
[24]Fauq, *Tarikh*, p. 62.

Yet another of Ganga Ram's recruits was Pandit Daya Ram. Daya Ram, also a resident of Delhi, had migrated with his father from Kashmir. When Ganga Ram marched against the Poonch fortress in 1813, he was accompanied by Daya Ram. The following year, Daya Ram wrote a history of Ranjit Singh, entitled the *Shir u Shakkar* (Milk and Sugar).[25] The only extant copy of this work was copied by the author's son, Gulab Rai.[26] Later the Pandit himself was put in charge of the administration of Jhang and of the Ramgharia country. Gulab Rai meanwhile served as *bakhshi* in the Sikh armies.[27]

The community thus expanded rapidly. Those brought to Lahore by Ganga Ram in turn brought their own connections to the Punjab. Those who were well-off could offer situations attractive enough to draw in potential in-laws. For example, Gulab Rai married his daughter to Inder Narain, the son of a high official in the Jaipur Darbar, and Inder Narain then established his own family in Lahore.[28]

There is considerable disagreement over the circumstances and date of the Madan family's arrival at the Khalsa Darbar. In his *Zafar Nama*, Amar Nath Madan, son of Dina Nath, recorded that in 1815, 'the Maharaja inspected the royal archives and was so well satisfied with the method displayed by Diwan Ganga Ram in the assortment of state papers that he rewarded the dewan and permitted him to send for a secretary. . . .It was under such happy auspices that Dewan Ganga Ram secured the services of Pandit Dina Nath.'[29]

According to Fauq, however, the Madans took their name from an area in Kashmir known as Madan-yar and had originally been known by the surname 'Razdan'.[30] During Ranjit Singh's reign, one Pandit Mansa Ram Razdan 'incomparable for his piety, ascetism and knowledge,' is known to have come from Kashmir to the Punjab.[31] This Razdan Sahib, or Dhuni Sahib as he became

[25]C. A. Storey, *Persian Literature, a Biographical Survey* (London, 1927–53), Vol. 4, p. 668.

[26]*Punjab University Historical Society Journal*, Vol. 8 (April 1944), p. 11.

[27]*Oriental College Magazine* (Urdu) Punjab University, Vol. 2, No. 4 (1926), p. 57.

[28]*Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. 1, p. 502.

[29]Amar Nath, 'Zafar Nama', p. 289.

[30]Fauq, *Tarikh*, p. 66.

[31]Ganesh Das, *Char-Bagh-i-Punjab*, trans. G. S. Grewel and Indu Banga (Amritsar, 1971), p. 71.

known, instructed Dina Nath to visit his *matha* in Gujarat. When Ranjit Singh visited the *matha* before proceeding to battle he encountered the Pandit and invited him forthwith to Lahore.[32] (This is one of the few instances in which a *guru* is credited with efficacious intervention in the affairs of a *karkun*; however it is but one of many examples of a ruler happening upon a Pandit engaged in writing and immediately imploring the services of the scribe.) Later, the Pandit rebuilt and endowed with two villages the shrine of Mansa Ram from a *jagir* bestowed upon him by the Maharaja worth 2000 rupees annually. The shrine of the *guru* became known as Dhuni Sahib, a name derived from the smoke of a fire fed by fakirs and kept burning perpetually.[33]

Yet Dina Nath was not the first of his family to appear in Lahore. Dina Nath's family had been settled in the plains for several generations. Like the Ghumkhuars, the Madans had served in both the Mughal and Nawabi administrations. Dina Nath's father, Bakht Mal, accompanied John Malcolm on his mission to Ranjit Singh in 1805, after which he wrote a history of the Sikhs entitled Khalsa Nama.[34] And when Malcolm subsequently authored his own sketch, he acknowledged his debt to his favorite *munshi*.[35]

Bakht Mal married the sister of Ganga Ram's wife and had two sons, Kedar Nath and Dina Nath. Both were raised in the Bazar Sita Ram in a house near that of Ganga Ram.[36]

In any event, the rise of Dina Nath was a rapid one. According to Griffin, he first commanded the attention of the Maharaja following the capture of Multan in 1818. Ranjit Singh was impressed by the clarity with which he drew up the list of those entitled to awards. He was then put in charge of the muddled revenue accounts of the district.[37] When his uncle and mentor, Ganga Ram, died in 1826, Dina Nath inherited the charge of the Royal Seal, and eight years later, upon the death of Bhawani Das, the Pandit was made head of the Civil and Finance Office. By 1838, he had risen so high that he was given the title Diwan and an estate

[32]Interview with Ladli Nath Gurtoo, Srinagar, July 1979.

[33]*Gujrat District Gazetteer, 1883-1884*, p. 53.

[34]Rieu, *Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the British Museum*, Vol. I (1879), p. 294; and Storey, *Persian Literature*, p. 666.

[35]John Malcolm, *Sketch of the Sikhs* (London, 1812), p. 14.

[36]Griffin and Massey, *Chiefs*, p. 266.

[37]Ibid.

worth 10,000 rupees.[38] The *Umdat ul Tawarikh*, the diary of Ranjit Singh's reign, mentioned Dina Nath frequently, showing how he was summoned constantly by the Maharaja to draw allowances, prepare accounts, or deal with the troublesome 'Lat Sahibs'.[39]

The role of mediator between the Khalsa Darbar and the Lat Sahibs was one which Kashmiris at court were frequently called upon to fill. In part, this was an extension of their position as outsiders: in part a result of their scholarly reputation and role. Many of the Pandits associated with Ranjit Singh wrote about the Maharaja. Their accounts were apparently seized upon by British officials of the Company. Such officers were all too anxious to educate themselves about the empire neighbouring their own. As authorities on the Khalsa Darbar, and yet apart from it, Kashmiris must have appeared to be more authoritative and accurate than the Sikhs themselves.

Correspondingly, the Kashmiri servants of the Maharaja similarly seem to have been regarded as authorities on the 'Lat Sahibs' by the Sikhs. This was an image they seem to have consciously fostered. Indeed, Pandits were frequently employed to serve as ambassadors to the Company's *darbars*. Thus, shortly after his arrival at court, Ganga Ram 'offered to gather through his own agency some detailed account about the English sahibs.'[40] His offer was accepted with alacrity. Ayodhia Prasad was similarly relied upon to deal with the English. In 1831, he was sent to receive Lieutenant Burnes and escort him to Lahore. There the Lieutenant engaged himself in an elaborate protocol so as to present the Maharaja with various tokens from the King of England.[41] Several years later, Ayodhia Prasad was directed to accompany the army of the Indus under Sir John Keane, from Attock to Ferozepur. According to Griffin, 'his attention and anxiety to meet the wishes of the General were warmly acknowledged by that officer.'[42]

The clerical role of the Pandits contributed to an image of Kashmiris that was deceptively passive. Even Dina Nath, one of

[38]Fauq, *Tarikh*, p. 68.

[39]Lala Sohan Lal Suri, *Umdat ul Tawarikh*, covering the years 1831–8, trans. V. S. Suri, and S. Chand (Delhi, 1961). For examples, see pp. 9, 16, 46, 201, 244, 299, 393, 404, 438, 610.

[40]*Events at the Court*, p. 146.

[41]Suri, *Umdat ul Tawarikh*, pp. 3–9.

[42]Griffin and Massey, *Chiefs*, p. 279.

the most powerful figures at Court, is represented in most paintings of the Darbar as a simple scribe.[43] The Resident at Lahore, F. Currie, in his correspondence with the Governor-General, alluded to crucial conferences in which Dina Nath took down the proceedings in Persian as if his role was more to record than to shape Khalsa policy.[44]

Yet Kashmiris were content to remain inconspicuous. They felt, perhaps, that it was safer to be regarded with contempt than with envy.

Both the British and advisors of the Lahore Darbar were well aware of developments to the north. They kept in constant communication with political affairs in the Afghan capital of Kabul and in Kashmir. Authorities and would-be authorities in Kabul constantly solicited the support of the Punjabi Maharaja for their own claims, offering as bait the possible possession of Kashmir.

Moreover, the relative stability of the Khalsa Darbar seems to have been duly noted by the less ambitious functionaries of the Afghan Sultanate. From an early date, they arrived in Lahore to offer their services to Ranjit Singh. Among the newcomers from the northwest were Sahaj Ram Tikku[45] and Lal Kaul.

Lal Kaul was descended from one of the oldest families in Kashmir. He was known as a Nigari Kaul because his ancestors had served with the Mughals as officers of the *naqqar khana*.[46] After a quarrel with the military Governor of Kashmir Lal Kaul set out for the *matha* of Mansa Ram Razdan in Gujarat. Here he encountered Ranjit Singh, who invited the Pandit back to his capital.[47]

When Ranjit Singh sent Diwan Chand to conquer Kashmir in 1819, Lal Kaul accompanied the expedition. He took part in the military campaigns of the Sikhs from that time as head of the

[43]Archer, *Paintings of the Sikhs*, figures 61, 62 and 64.

[44]F. Currie to Governor-General, 5 Dec. 1846. United Kingdom, *Parliamentary Papers Relating to the Punjab*. Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty, May 1949 (1847–9).

[45]*Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. 2, p. 975.

[46]Fauq, *Tarikh*, p. 64.

[47]Interview with Raja Upendra Kishen Kaul and Mahendra Kishen Kaul, descendants of Lal Kaul in Delhi, May and August 1979.

Rawalpindi Brigade which functioned under his command until its last appearance at Subraon in 1846.[48] Although given extensive *jagirs* in the conquered province of his homeland Kashmir, Lal Kaul preferred to remain in the Punjab, and was eventually made Governor of Multan.[49]

Shortly after Ranjit Singh's troops entered Kashmir. Ram Chand Tikoo arrived in Amritsar, where his son, Sahaj Ram, was born. Sahaj Ram eventually joined the Sikh army as *naib bakhshi*.[50]

Ranjit Singh's conquest of Kashmir in 1819 resulted in greater communication between that province and Punjab. He set into motion an accelerated pace of migration by the Pandits of the valley. Accounts such as Diwan Kripa Ram's *Gulab Nama* present the Maharaja's intervention as a mission of mercy for the Hindus of Kashmir; the Afghan Governor, Azim Khan, it was alleged 'unleashed violence and oppression. He extorted the jizya tax from Hindu people. Avaricious of gold and property and unmindful of consequences, he started extracting excruciating fines and repugnant demands. Most especially he subjected the Hindus and Pandits to a variety of pain and torture.'[51]

Under Ranjit Singh, however, the Kashmiri *kardars* continued to be pressed for enormous sums of money. In 1883, for example, five Pandit *kardars* were asked for a total of 325,000 rupees.[52] General conditions in the valley did not improve. Famine and flight from Kashmir continued. Only now the direction was Lahore rather than Kabul for those possessing literacy and ambition. A regular mail service between Srinagar and Lahore, via Shopian and Rampur in the summer and Baramulla and Poonch in the winter, began almost immediately following the Sikh conquest of Kashmir. The mail, however, was transported by coolie. In spite of the greater ease of communication, transport facilities remained primitive. There was no cart road.[53]

[48]Griffin and Massey, *Chiefs*, p. 369.
[49]Interviews-with P. K. Kaul and M. K. Kaul.
[50]*Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. 2, p. 975.
[51]Kirpa Ram, *Gulab Nama*, p. 88.
[52]Suri, *Umdat ut Tawarikh*, p. 166.
[53]J. L. Raina, *Means of Communication in the Last Century in Kashmir and How Control Passed into British Hands* (Lahore, 1926), p. 3 (The mail route was also that taken by most migrants.)

In spite of the hardships of the journey, traffic increased in both directions. Cunningham even referred to some Kashmiris who returned to Kashmir at this time. As he put it, 'it is curious that the consolidation of Ranjit Singh's power should have induced several of these [Kashmiri Brahmans] to repair to the Punjab [from Delhi and Lucknow] and even to return to their original country.'[54]

The establishment of closer links introduced a migratory stream of those whose calling was commercial as well as clerical. Amritsar, rather than Lahore, was the destination of those who typified this trend; among them were members of the Karwayon family of Pandits.[55]

Kanwal Karwayon was a merchant in Kashmir. He specialized in exporting to Amritsar cloth, blankets and wool, particularly *pashmina*, the very fine wool from which shawls were woven by the large colony of Kashmiri weavers in Amritsar. During the first years of Ranjit Singh's reign, Kanwal Karwayon gave a valuable shipment of *pashmina* to his own *purohit* who was then journeying to Amritsar. When no news was received, either of *purohit* or payment, the only son of Karwayon was dispatched to investigate. Shortly thereafter the merchant died, and his son, Himmat Narain or Himmat Ram, chose to stay in the Punjab. There he was joined by his mother and wife. Himmat Narain eventually became the household manager for a Pathan nobleman residing in Amritsar. Later, he moved to Lahore where his three daughters and two sons, Amir Chand (b. 1830), and Ganga Ram (b. 1835) were born.

Himmat Narain was anxious to establish his family in government or private service rather than commerce. He was motivated primarily by the fact that the educational facilities in Lahore were far superior to those in Amritsar. While many Kashmiris were conversing in simple Punjabi, Himmat Narain's sons received lessons in Arabic, Persian, and Urdu from *mullas*, and memorised the Quran. Once again, following initial migration, mobility was a relatively easy affair, practicality rather than tradition or sentiment determining location.

Ganga Ram, Himmat Narain's second son, chose not to remain in Lahore. Moving back to Amritsar, he joined a mercantile firm

[54]Joseph Davey Cunningham, *History of the Sikhs* (reprint, Delhi, 1972), p. 153, footnote.

[55]Fauq, *Tarikh*, p. 56 and interviews in Delhi and Allahabad with two Pandits wishing anonymity.

specializing in the import of English goods, primarily for the city's British residents. His company forged close links with the Company authorities, and frequently Ganga Ram was delegated to look after the welfare of foreign partners of the firm. In the evenings, Ganga Ram studied law. Later he passed the *mukhtarship* examination, purchased a home and an office and began to practise law.

Thus the career of Ganga Ram Karwayon can be seen to have closely paralleled that of Ganga Prasad Taimini in Avadh. Both renounced their mercantile roots, the one in wool, the other in the silk trade (in themselves the two commodities say much about the differing natures of economy and culture in the two provinces) for professional service. In both cases, mobility was made possible by the institution of an examination system. Ganga Ram and Ganga Prasad were able to take advantage of a new device to conform more closely to traditional ideals. Although they were members of a traditional service community, they originally stood at the periphery of the community ideals. They had lacked the connections which had hitherto provided entrée into official employment. The establishment of an examination system provided an alternative route to the realization of old aspirations.

The history of the Pandit community therefore indicates that the new institutions widened opportunity, but did not significantly alter traditional aspirations. Those who took advantage of these new institutions—namely English-language classes at Delhi, or the service entrance examination system—had previously just barely been excluded from such positions.

Mobility in mid-nineteenth century Indian society thus seems to have been extended largely to greater numbers of those who were already in hereditary service communities. It bequeathed to them more avenues into and more positions within the official administrative structure. The effect of this within the Kashmiri community was to reduce internal differentiation, to reduce the dependence of the majority of Pandits upon the leadership by providing alternative access to jobs, and to enable more members of the community to realize traditional ideals.

Ganga Ram began his career without significant financial or material resources. He was unable to marry advantageously. Ganga Ram's wife was a pure Kashmiri, whose family had arrived in the Punjab more recently than the Karwayons. Because Ganga Ram was capable, he achieved considerable mobility both within

his own community and within the larger society. Eventually he was recruited by Raja Suraj Kaul, the son of Lal Kaul, and when Kaul was lent to the Kashmir State Government in 1888, Ganga Ram accompanied Suraj Kaul to Srinagar. There he served as *wazir-wazarat*. Ten years later when he retired to Amritsar, he had come into the possession of an impressive amount of property. This was inherited by his only son, Ram Nath.

Ranjit Singh's death in 1839 was far more devastating for the fortunes of the Punjab in general than for the fortunes of individual Pandit families. In the years between the death of the Maharaja and annexation by the British in 1849, Dina Nath served a succession of regents: Kharak Singh, Nau Nihal Singh, Sher Singh, and finally Dalip Singh. He retained his influence and increased his wealth. He signed the first Treaty of Lahore with the British in 1846 and was one of the eight members of the Council of Regency established after the first Anglo-Sikh War later that same year. By the time the Khalsa Darbar lost control over the Punjab, his own estate was estimated to be worth 47,000 rupees annually. Following the second war, in 1849, Dina Nath, by now styled Raja by the British, collaborated with the new rulers, reaping ever-growing rewards until his death in 1857.

Such then, in brief, is the life of Dina Nath. More interesting, however, is the image which the British had of the man. The new authorities in the Punjab, both civil and military, found him both fascinating and enigmatic. He was a figure they could neither completely ignore nor trust. The uncertainty with which he was regarded, as well as perceptions of his enormous potential power to obstruct, made the English attribute all sorts of developments to his machinations. Lord Hardinge wrote to Frederick Currie, then Resident at Lahore, in December 1846, 'Dina Nath is able enough to thwart and disturb the measures of government. . . .I suppose he is at the bottom of the affair.[56]

Over the next few years, British speculation concerning the Raja increased. Rebellions multiplied, and as the Darbar insisted that only Dina Nath was capable of resolving conflicts, and as they were not at all sure of where the Raja's sympathies lay, British

[56] *Private Correspondence Relating to the Anglo-Sikh Wars* (Amritsar/Patiala, Historical Society, 1955), pp. 13-14.

anxieties increased. When Chattar Singh Alhuwalia took to arms, the Resident at Lahore notified the Secretary to the Governor-General (in September 1848) that 'Sardar Gulab Singh was most importunate [that] Raja Dina Nath be sent to bring in the rebels and seemed most confident of his success. The Darbar also wish it.' Still, local officials regarded Dina Nath as a realist who would ultimately support the stronger side. Wrote Lieutenant Edwardes from Multan: 'Whatever Dina Nath's inclinations, they seldom prejudice his judgment. [In spite of his] sympathy with the sardar's aspirations, he will still point out however the siege may embarrass us for a time, in the end we can crush the Khalsa army as easily as once we spared it.'[57]

While the Resident found no cause for alarm in the Raja's performance, his lack of ease did not abate. Currie recalled Dina Nath to Lahore and reported to the Governor-General: 'He *apparently* used his influence in every way to defeat the machinations of the rebel and since his return *appears* to have entered zealously and earnestly into the measures adopted for the punishment of the rebels .... But there is no doubt, whatever his views and feelings regarding the conspiracy that he is disaffected towards the British Government...'[58] In a postscript to this report, Currie added that at the very moment he was writing, the Raja had arrived and had shown him a letter inviting him to join Chattar Singh against the English. Still sceptical, the Resident added that 'it would be more satisfactory if the letter had reached him secretly. He must know I would hear of it. The affair proves nothing about Dina Nath either one way or another.'[59]

The continuing fascination of local officials with the Raja is evident in H. M. Elliott's report on a meeting with the Darbar and with members of the council of regency in March 1849. In the meeting local rulers were informed of the British Government's decision to annex the Punjab. Dina Nath signed the agreement, 'not without sorrow and repugnance', the Secretary to the Governor-General noted. 'There was silence in the Darbar, then Raja Dina Nath observed the decision of the British Government

[57]Edwardes to Resident, 7 Sept. 1833, United Kingdom, *Parliamentary Papers*, Vol. 41, p. 331.

[58]Resident to Sec. Gov-Gen., *Parliamentary Papers*, 30 Sept. 1849, p. 379 (italics mine).

[59]Ibid.

was just and should be obeyed, but he trusted the Maharaja and servants of the government would receive consideration.... From the inquiries he had made during our private conference it would not be uncharitable to suppose his sadness arose more from the loss of the immense influence he possesse(d) in every department of state than from regret at the subversion of his master's dynasty.'[60]

In reviewing Dina Nath's career in the years after 1846, Lepel Griffin wrote, 'Although his position as head of the Financial Department gave him great opportunities of enriching himself at public expense which there is every reason to believe he availed himself of, he still worked more disinterestedly than others .... Without his clear head and business-like habits, it would have been almost impossible to disentangle the Darbar accounts .... Certain it is that he carried out the wishes of the authorities ... [and] after the annexation of the Punjab [he] was confirmed in all his jagirs.'[61]

Griffin may be perceived as having summarized the British image of Dina Nath. Dina Nath, in Griffin's view, represented the archetypical Pandit. Here was a figure of unsurpassed intelligence. But to what end and whose purpose? The very status of Dina Nath as an 'outsider' whose interests were divorced from those of his superiors had made the British uneasy. 'Revolutions in which his friends and patrons perished passed him by .... When to other eyes the political sky was clear he could perceive the signs of a coming storm which warned him to desert a losing party or a falling friend: He was patriotic but his love of country was subordinate to his love of self. He was not without his own notions of fidelity and would stand by a friend so long as he could do so with safety to himself.'[62]

The qualities Griffin associated with Raja Dina Nath can be seen as those which represent Pandits as a group and traits which all Pandits seemed to embody. Their commitments were said to be determined by rational rather than by emotional decisions. Their loyalties were always subordinate to their survival. But when Griffin wrote that the Kashmiri's love of country was subordinate to his love of self he seems to have missed one point. Lahore was

[60]Elliot to Government, 29 March 1849, *Parliamentary Papers*, Vol. 41, p. 652.
[61]Griffin and Massey, *Chiefs*, pp. 264–5.
[62]Ibid., p. 255.

the place where Dina Nath's interests rather than his heart lay. The Punjab was a base of operations and not the homeland of the Madan family. Distance rather than disloyalty accounted for the apparent detachment of the Pandit and for the apparent ease with which he served and transferred his service.

Dina Nath's son Amar Nath did not display a pattern of behaviour typical of most second-generation Kashmiris at the Khalsa Darbar. A chronicler of, rather than a participant in, political affairs at Lahore, he could stand aside. Given a traditional *maktabi* education as was the ideal for the highest level of Kashmiri Pandits, he remained tied by tradition and livelihood to Islamic forms of training. At the age of six, he became the student of Maulvi Ahmad Baksh Chisti, considered by his contemporaries the most learned scholar of his day. By the age of eleven, Amar Nath knew both Arabic and Persian, and was producing essays in Persian. One such literary endeavour, an account of the gardens of Lahore entitled *Rauzat ul Azhar*, was considered remarkable enough for the Maharaja to ask the precocious author to serve as something equivalent to poet laureate in his Darbar. In 1835, Amar Nath, then thirteen years old, produced a *Fateh Nama* commemorating the victory of the Sikhs over the Afghans at Peshawar that year.[63]

His *Zafar Nama*, written at Ranjit Singh's request and published in 1858, reflected the multiple worlds of the Kashmiri historian. Some chapters begin with standard Hindu invocations praising Rama, Vishnu and Krishna. Other chapters extol the Sikh *gurus* and Queen Victoria. Simultaneously, however, the text as a whole contains numerous quotations from the Quran and the Hadith, or traditions of the Prophet.[64] In spite of its eclectic form, Amar Nath's work elicited admiration from the English. Griffin described his *Zafar Nama* as 'undoubtedly one of the most valuable and interesting [works] any Indian author has produced since the annexation of the Punjab.' This was true even though he felt 'the style [was] too elaborate for European taste.'[65]

The sons of first-generation Kashmiris employed by the Khalsa Darbar generally took an active role in political affairs. Their careers outlasted the existence of the state they served. Pandits

[63]Amar Nath Madan, *Zafar Nama-i-Ranjit Singh*, ed. Sita Ram Kohli (Lahore, 1928), introduction, pp. v-vi.

[64]Ibid. [65]Griffin and Massey, *Chiefs*, p. 265.

then successfully weathered imperial annexation; and surpassed their previous access to official positions.

Ayodhia Prasad (the only son of that Ganga Ram who had originally drawn Pandits to Lahore), had, it may be recalled, served in the military branch of the administration and was given command of Ventura's brigade following the general's departure for Europe and during the turbulence after the Maharaja's death. Ayodhia Prasad served in this position until the end of the Sutlej campaign. After this, he too, resigned. Shortly thereafter, he penned an account of the campaign, entitled *Waqa-i-Jang-i-Sikhan*, or 'Events of the First Anglo-Sikh War 1845–1846.' In this, he contrasted the discipline of Company soldiers with that of Sikh troops. 'When they [the Sikhs] witnessed the strength of the British, they were forced to confess that the British proceeded with set purpose while they were chaotic. The British were as an advancing flood in a river or the tide in the ocean.'[66]

While the rest of the Darbar mourned the cession of a portion of Sikh territory to the Company at the end of the first military encounter, the former commander of the *fauj-i-khas* extolled 'the kindness and the greatness of the British [which] proclaimed to the world that in spite of the gross breach of treaty by the Sikh nation, and the complete victory of the British, [the Company] out of regard for the memory of the Great Maharaja preserved the kingdom.'[67]

Following the treaty of 1846 between the Darbar and the Company, Ayodhia Prasad was appointed Co-Commissioner along with Sir Frederick Abbott, formerly his adversary at the Battle of Sobraon, to fix the boundaries between the territory sold to Gulab Singh and that remaining under Sikh rule. Griffin noted approvingly that the Pandit 'had given the greatest satisfaction to the authorities and had shown the greatest courtesy and attention to Captain Abbott.'[68] The reward for this courtesy was substantial. By the annexation, three years later, Diwan Ayodhia Prasad's estates were estimated to be worth almost 20,000 rupees annually. In addition, he received an annual salary of 5,000 rupees. The

[66]Ayodhia Prasad, *Waqa-i-Jang-i-Sikhan*, trans. V. S. Suri (Chandigarh, 1975), p. 32. I am grateful to the author's great-grandson, Diwan Anand Kumar, for lending me his copy.

[67]Prasad, *Waqa-i-Jang-i-Sikhan*, p. 51

[68]Griffin and Massey, *Chiefs*, pp. 282–3.

*jagirs* lapsed to the British government automatically, but the Kashmiri was given some compensation in the form of a pension of 7,500 rupees, of which 1,000 rupees were granted in perpetuity.[69] From 1849 until 1851, the diwan served as tutor to the young Maharaja, Dalip Singh, at Fatehgarh. He then returned to Lahore, remaining there until his death in 1870.

Lal Kaul was equally successful in surviving the transition to British rule with status and wealth intact. Like Ayodhia Prasad, his personal rapport with the British proved efficacious.[70] Although he had headed the Rawalpindiwalla Brigade, Lal Kaul emerged in 1849 confirmed in his *jagirs*. Following annexation, upon the recommendation of Sir John Lawrence, he was placed in charge of Rawalpindi District.

When Lal Kaul died in 1849, Lawrence brought up the Pandit's only (and adopted) son, Suraj Kaul (who was then 16). Sir John personally trained him for a career in the political department; a career destined to be successful, given the position of the boy's mentor.

The connection between Lawrence and Lal Kaul's son was replicated in the relations between other Kashmiris with other British patrons. In 1846, Colonel Badri Nath proceeded to Kashmir with Major Henry Lawrence. After this he went to Bannu with Lieutenant Edwardes.[71] Similarly, the son of Hari Ram, Shanker Nath (from the Central Records Office in Lahore), was, in Griffin's words, 'largely and confidentially employed by the British officers, Messrs Bowring, Cocks, Wedderburn and Major MacGregor; and all (bore) witness to the value of his services and his high character.'[72]

Post-annexation Punjab found Sahaj Ram Tikoo in the Punjab Government. General R.G. Taylor (1822–86) who had fought the Sikhs and who was made Commissioner of Amritsar[73] recommended Sahaj Ram for an appointment as Deputy

[69]Griffin and Massey, *Chiefs*, p. 282.

[70]Although he had headed the Rawalpindiwalla Brigade, Lal Kaul emerged in 1849 confirmed in his *jagirs*. Following annexation, upon the recommendation of Sir John Lawrence, he was placed in charge of Rawalpindi District. Interview with Raja Upendra Kishen Kaul, Delhi, May 1979; and Griffin and Massey, *Chiefs*, p. 369.

[71]Griffin and Massey, *Chiefs*, p. 398.

[72]Ibid., p. 364.

[73]Buckland, *Dictionary of Indian Biography*, 1906 (Banaras, 1971), p. 417.

Superintendent and then Superintendent of the city. He then secured the Pandit's promotion to the rank of Extra Assistant Commissioner. Unfortunately, the esteemed Kashmiri died just a week after the position was sanctioned in 1875,[74] and before he could enjoy the new marks of imperial favour with which he had been honoured.

That son of Ganga Bishen Ghumkhuar who had accompanied Ganga Ram from Delhi to Lahore also managed to elicit similar tokens of generosity from the Company. Although Radha Kishen had fought with the Khalsa armies in Multan, he became the first Rai Bahadur in the Punjab and was given land in Dera Ismail Khan over which he presided as Assistant Commissioner.[75]

One reason Kashmiri Pandits were regarded with as much favour by the British as they had been by Ranjit Singh, might have been that they were not Sikhs. In Avadh, the Pandits had attempted to disguise their foreign origins because their outside status was not as advantageous as it was in the Punjab. (That Punjab lay closer to their homeland and that the religion of the ruler of the province was closer to their own may also have been important.)

In Avadh, the Kashmiri community was much more numerous. But it boasted far fewer political leaders. Because Pandits attempted to maximize symbols and tokens of their public assimilation, they were not regarded as distinct.

The cultural worlds of Kashmiri Pandits in the two provinces reflected larger environmental differences. This becomes evident by examining the significance of the Pandit's cultural trappings in Lahore and Lucknow.

The Persian which secured entrée into the aristocratic cultural milieu of the nawabi capital simply secured employment at the Sikh capitals. The mastery of Persian which was the means of assimilation for the Pandits of Avadh merely set the Pandits of Lahore apart from the majority of those in attendance at the Khalsa Darbar, those who did not know Persian and found Punjabi adequate. The function of Persian at the court of Ranjit Singh was utilitarian rather than aesthetic. In both places Persian

[74] *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir,* Vol. 2, p. 975.
[75] Fauq, *Tarikh-i-Aquam-i-Kashmir*, p. 62.

gave access to high office but for the Kashmiris in Lahore, the language represented sustenance rather than life.

The Punjabi Pandits wrote less in Persian than members of the community elsewhere in north India, and what they did write differed greatly in form.[76] Punjabi Pandits authored more panegyrics and histories. Those in Avadh displayed a predilection for conventional poetry. Writing in the Punjab was meant either to be useful or to be commemorative, rather than to be beautiful.

Because language is such a critical component of self identity, the differing languages of the Kashmiris of the two provinces contributed to the perception each had of the other, once again corresponding to differences in the larger court culture.

If literature at Lahore tended to be historical rather than poetic, art tended toward portraiture. This came out of the impulse to sustain the personality cult around Ranjit Singh rather than to create a more enduring dynastic court culture; artistic endeavour as much as military policy was tied to the person of the Maharaja. Cultural institutions derived from the Mughal court culture were not as much part of Lahore as they were in Lucknow; Ranjit Singh did not take his inspiration from the splendours of the Safavid court in Persia. Rather he looked to his own roots. He was not a simple man but he made simplicity his ideal.

Even choice of dress distinguished the Nawabs of Avadh from the Punjabi monarch. The production of the nawabi wardrobe supported hundreds of artisans in Lucknow. The Maharaja's dress, according to Griffin, was 'scrupulously simple'. As he put it, 'In winter and spring he generally wore a warm dress of saffron coloured Kashmir cloth; in hot weather white Muslin without jewel or ornament except on occasions of special display.'[77]

Ranjit Singh also introduced the custom of wearing a great shield strapped to the back. The ideal set by the Maharaja was more martial than courtly. He was, Griffin noted, the 'beau ideal of a soldier, an excellent horseman and also a keen sportsman.' It was to this martial model that Kashmiri Pandits at least partially conformed. In short, Kashmiris reflected the life style of the ruler of their host society. This in the Punjab was far more earthy and less

[76]Examination of the *tazkirahs*, or biographical dictionaries of the community, yield the names of far fewer residents of the Punjab than of Avadh, for example.

[77]L. Griffin, *Ranjit Singh* (Oxford, 1892), p. 92. See also W. Archer, *Painting of the Sikhs* (London, 1966), p. 33.

'stylish' that in north India. The characteristic pastime of the Kashmiri at the Lahore *darbar* was not a polished recitation of poetry but a vigorous workout on horseback.

The Kashmiris also related very differently within the larger social environments of the two provinces. An important aspect of Kashmiri identity was the fact that they were Brahmans. This fact was perceived in different ways in Avadh and in Punjab. Avadh was the heartland of Aryavarta while Punjab was a less orthodox frontier environment.

Kashmiris had very little in common with the local Brahmans of north India. The local Brahmans were generally rural, unlike the cosmopolitan Pandits; and if literate, they were educated in Sanskrit rather than Persian. Furthermore, they avoided taking meat, while the Kashmiris were overwhelmingly non-vegetarians. The Kashmiris, therefore, were regarded by Hindusthani Brahmans as a separate and decidedly inferior group. The Bengali author of the 1865 Census for the Northwest Provinces even wrote that 'the Kashmir Pandits who attempt to pass themselves off as an offshoot of the Brahmin class . . .were really Kayasths.'[78] However, by the standards of most Brahmans of Aryavarta, the orthodoxy of *all* the Brahmans in the Punjab appeared questionable. Moreover, Brahmanical ideals (as well as Brahmanical practices) were perceived as not being deeply rooted. There was nobody to rebuke those who departed from such ideals. It was therefore easier to be accepted as a Brahman in Lahore than in Lucknow. This was so if only because it meant less. If Brahmans of the Punjab were slightly lacking in orthodoxy, society may simply have reciprocated by extending less respect to them.[79] This meant that the distance between local Brahmans and the Kashmiris in Punjab was less than it was in Avadh. The norms of the community, if different, were not seen as inferior or as departures from high ideals as they were elsewhere in north India. Thus, if a Kashmiri aspired to play an active role in Hindu society it was easier for him to do so in Lahore than in the nawabi province because the Hindus of the Punjab were a minority and the Kashmiri's status less open to question.

Neither by tradition nor by necessity were Pandits in Lahore disposed to think of themselves as a harmonizing social force or as a link group between communities. Yet that was the very image of

[78]*Census Report for the Northwestern Provinces* (1965), p. 51.
[79]See, for example, P. Tandon, *Punjabi Century*, pp. 76–7.

themselves which Pandits of the Northwestern provinces promoted. Those who sought leadership beyond the community did not tend to envision a role of syncretic leadership. The strength of the Punjabi Pandits lay in their position and wealth. These they had achieved under the Sikhs and consolidated under the British. They owed nothing to and had little to gain from Muslims. (And the Muslims likewise felt little need of similar links.)

By 1857, both Avadh as well as the Punjab had come under the direct rule of the Government of India. The developments which followed the events of 1857 favoured the Pandits in both provinces. But again, circumstances of the larger social environment differed. In Avadh, Kashmiris found themselves relatively assimilated into a politically weakened Muslim community and in a society where a Hindu community was growing increasingly assertive. In the Punjab, the Hindu community, still perceiving itself as a minority at a time when numbers began to matter, was more prepared to accept the Pandits as Hindus.

Although the source of authority and power had shifted in Lahore, Kashmiris managed to retain their strategic position in local government structures and to function as intermediaries. With their local connections established before Ranjit Singh had first encountered Company resistance at the peripheries of his expanding empire; with their place in the administration already firm; and with their unquestioned position in local Hindu society the Kashmiris of the Punjab were relatively well off.

# Plates

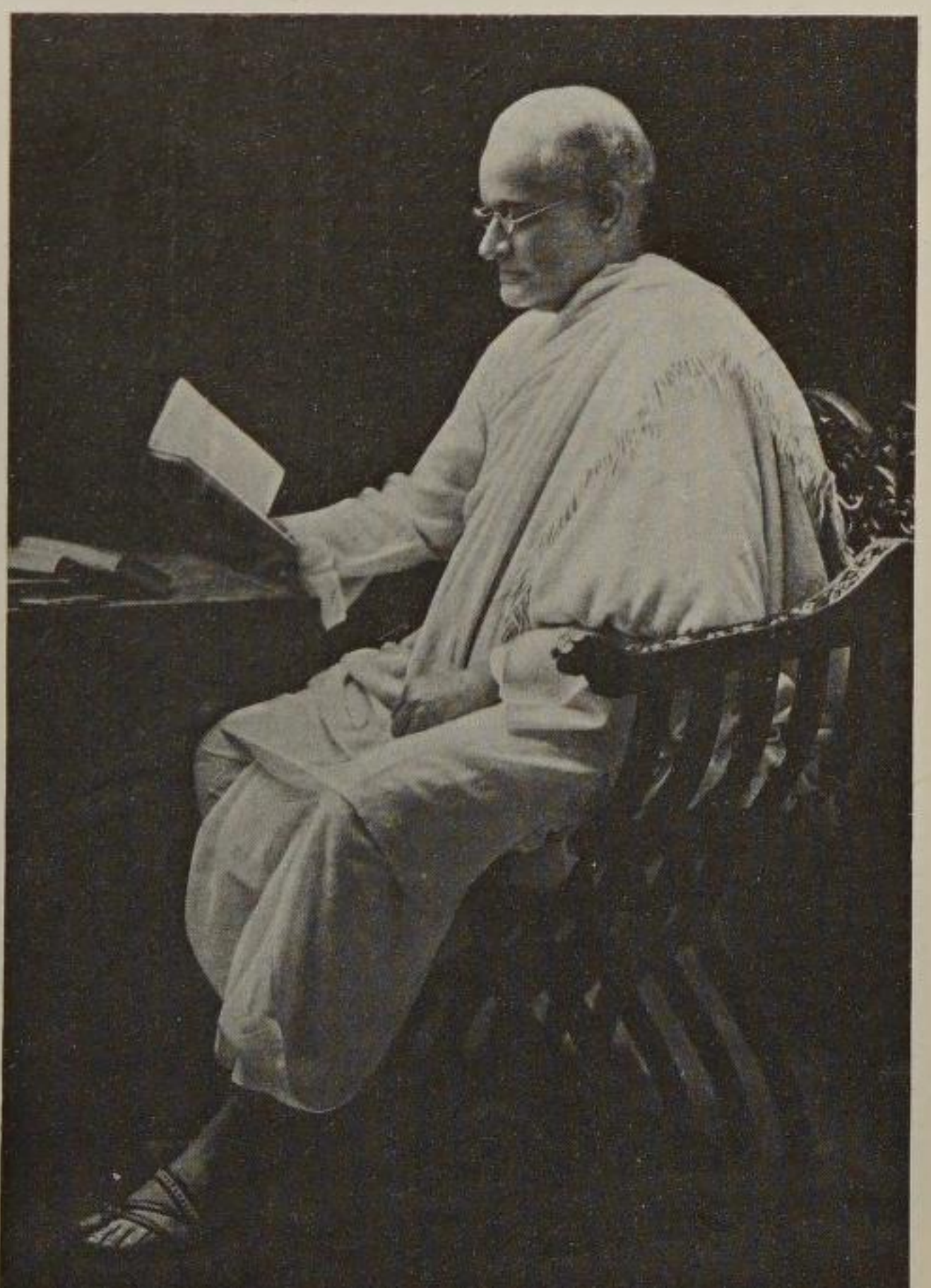
Kashmiri Pandit National Club Anniversary Meeting, Lucknow, 1882

From left to right:
*First row* (children sitting): —, Kashi Narayan Bahadur, —, Janki Pershad Kaul Barq, —, —, Brij Mohan Narayan Kaul, —, Kameshur Nath Shargha.
*Second row* (standing): Raja Sheo Nath Singh Kaul, Ikbal Narayan Dar; (seated): Kanhaiya Lal Sahbin, Hirday Narayan Kaul, —, Durga Pershad Mushran, Ratan Narayan Dar, Kishan Narayan Dar, Ram Narayan Upadhya, Kali Sahai Mulla, Pem Nath Hangal, Kishen Narain Harkauli, Bishen Narain Kaul, Prem Nath Takru, Niranjan Nath Baqaya.
*Third row*: Baij Nath Kaul, Pran Kishen Zubbu, Maharaj Kishen Munshi, Ganga Pershad Hukku, Madan Mohan Kishan Masaldan, Shyam Narain Masaldan, Lalji Kaul, Ganga Pershad Taimni, Bisheshur Nath Hangal, —, Suraj Narain Bahadur, Rup Narain Tankha, Iqbal Narain Bahadur, Brij Mohan Kishen Masaldan, Amar Nath Haksar, Sarup Narain Kaul, Jai Narain Masaldan, Pran Nath Bazaz, Baij Nath Hukku, Kashi Nath Takru, Ajudhya Nath Takru.
*Fourth row*: Lachmi Narayan Shargha, Indar Pershad Kaul, Kesho Nath Gurtu, Ajodhya Pershad Taimni, Bisheshur Nath Bhan, Mohan Kishan Bakhshi, —, Somnath Langu, Rameshur Nath Mubayi, Iqbal Kishan Shargha, Iqbal Kishan Kichlu, Jagat Narain Mulla, Bishambhar Nath Mushran, Sri Kishen Tikku, Hirday Narain Dar, Sangam Lal Chak, Kishan Lal Ruggu, Radhey Pershad Wantu, —, Madho Pershad Shargha, —.
*Back row*: Gopi Nath Mushran, Iqbal Narayan Masaldan, Ram Nath Tankha, Dwarka Nath Tankha, Manmohan Masaldan, Suraj Narain Zarchob, Tribhuwan Nath Sopori, Ajudhya Nath Kunzru, Hari Chandar Nath Munshi, Bishambhar Nath Takru, Indar Narain Masaldan, Kashi Nath Ganju, Mohan Kishan Gurtu, Kamta Pershad Wantu, Bishan Narayan Dar (Bar-at-Law).

Kashmiri Pandit National Club Anniversary Meeting, Lucknow, 1882

Kashmiri Young Men's Association, Lahore, *c.* 1920

Motilal Nehru, *c.* 1880



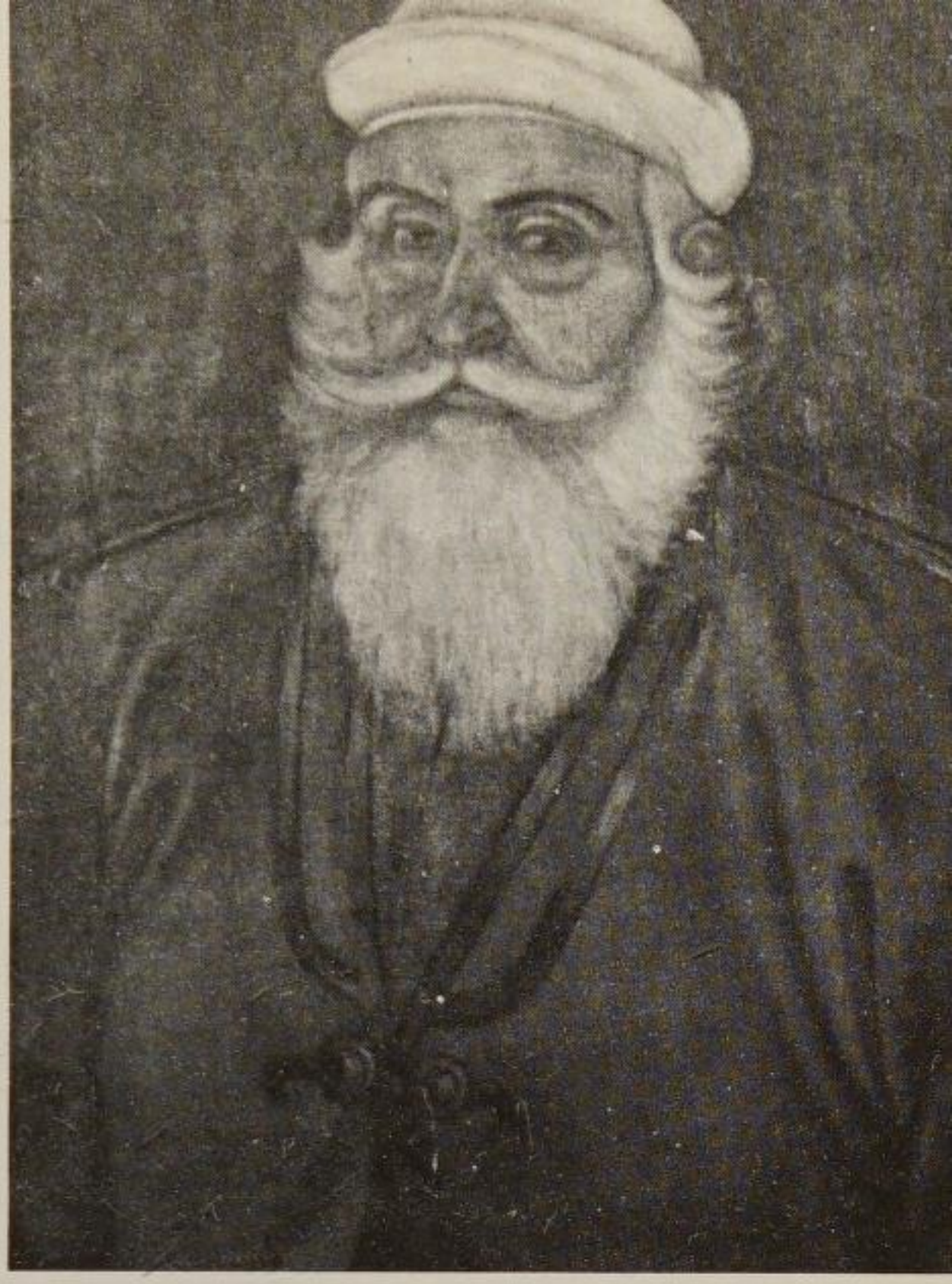
Motilal Nehru, *c.* 1930

T. B. Sapru, *c*. 1910

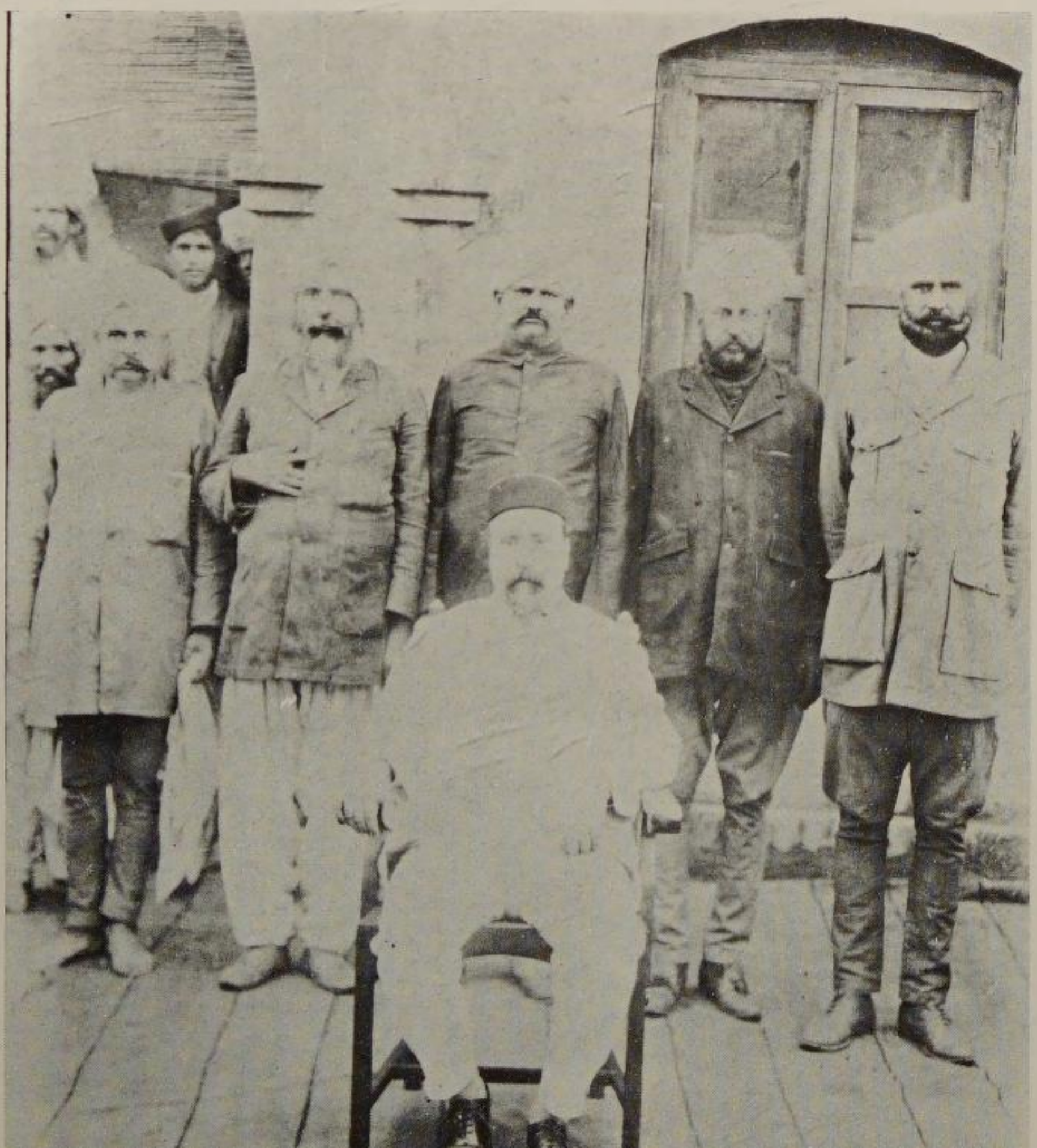
Mrs T. B. Sapru, *c*. 1900

T. B. Sapru in his study, *c*. 1930

Ayodhia Prasad, *c.* 1850



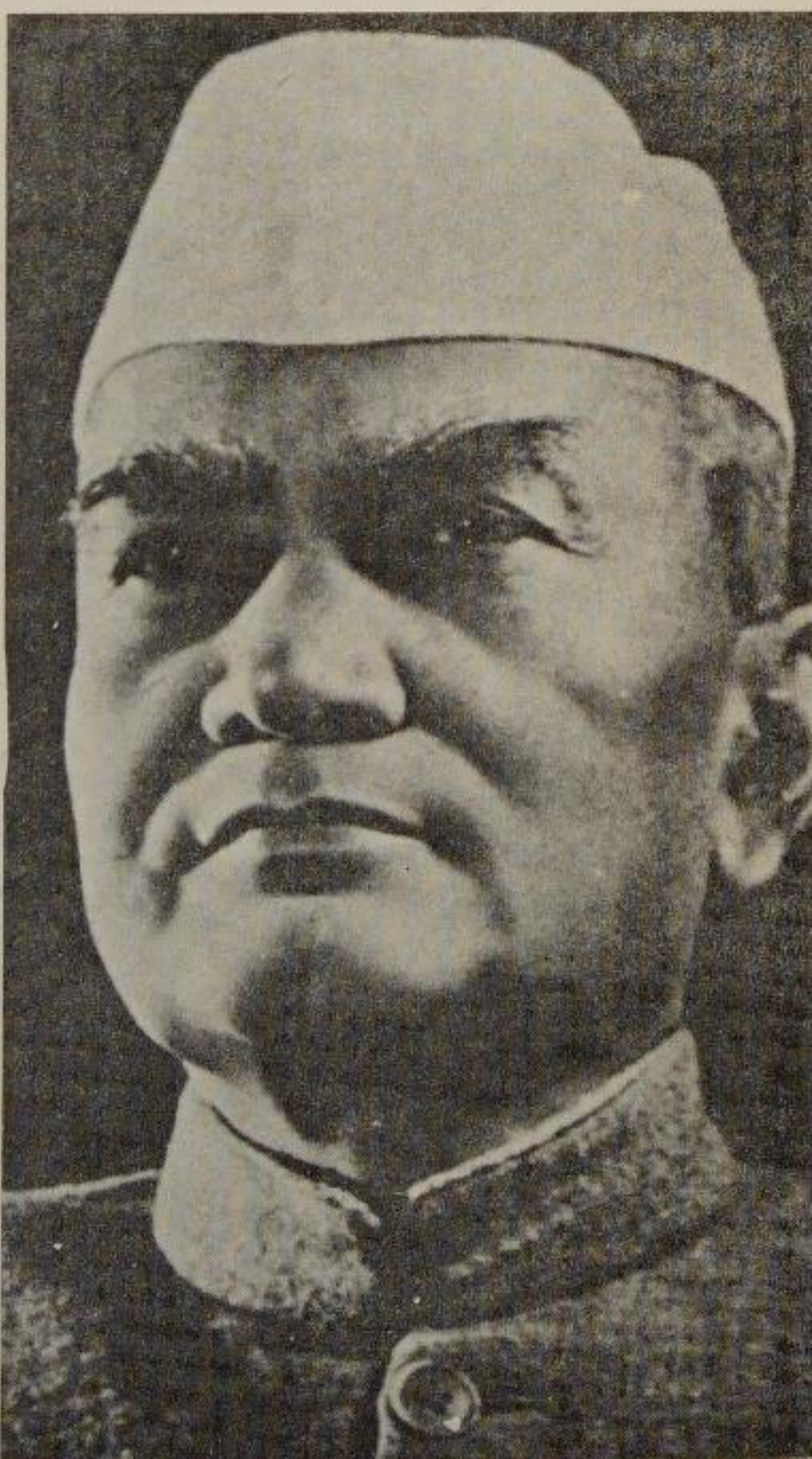
Raja Narendranath when
Deputy Collector, *c.* 1890



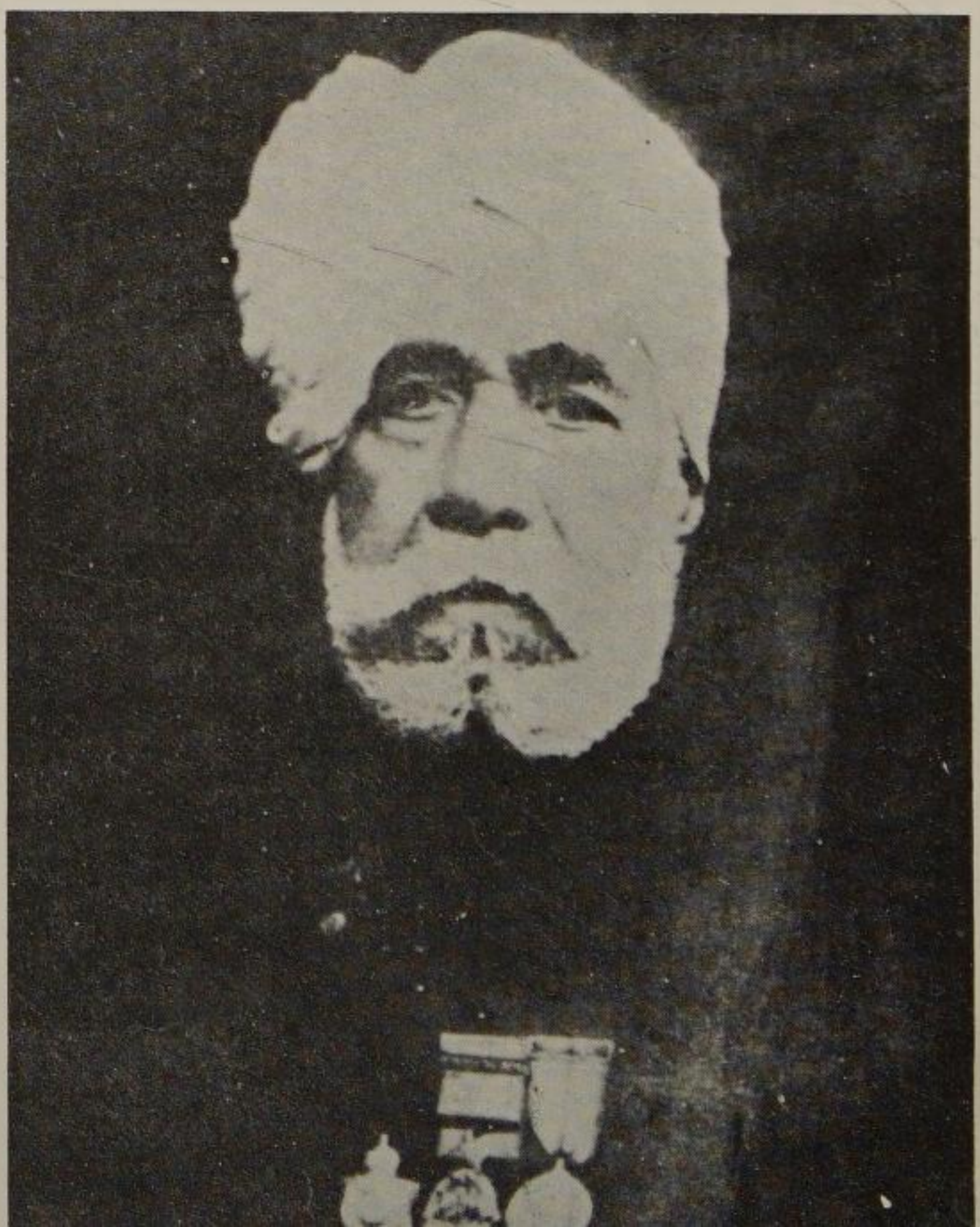
Raja Narendranath with his family, Lahore, *c.* 1920

Narendranath is seated in the middle row with his wife on his right. Standing behind him are his son Diwan Anand Kumar (holding his first child), B. L. Nehru, J. N. Atal, P. K. Wattal, —, and T. N. Mulla.

Shiv N. 'Shamim'



Amar Nath Atal



Sukhdeo Prasad

CHAPTER VI

# The Kashmiri Pandits in Delhi

By the end of Shah Alam's reign (1806), a sizeable colony of Kashmiri Pandits became rooted in Delhi with a large branch of the community bent toward the satellite court of the Nawab of Avadh. The direction of Kashmiri migration was reversed in the early nineteenth century when Delhi experienced a brief but intense renaissance while Avadh was the object of British pressure which left its rulers first harassed and then indifferent.

The second quarter of the nineteenth century was a relatively idyllic interlude in the city's history, as C.F. Andrews evoked it. 'When the English peace ás it was called was firmly established, there was great abundance within the city. The markets contained few foreign goods, the countryside goods were fine in quality and not expensive.'[1] Socially, these years were marked by 'especially friendly relations between Hindus and Muslims . . . a feature of which proud old residents, whether Hindu or Muslim, spoke of with enthusiasm and contrasted it with the bitterness of modern times.'[2]

This period was recalled and idealized as the Delhi Renaissance. Culturally, it was characterized by great advances both in the world of traditional Urdu prose and poetry and in the new intellectual world of western sciences. As the passages above indicate, it was also a period of exceptional prosperity and what in retrospect appeared exceptional communal harmony.

Most members of the Kashmiri community remembered with nostalgia the absence of communal tensions and their contribution to that absence. Others, however, chose to dwell on more sectarian moments in the history of the Mughal empire, representing the Mughals as presiding over a world that was neither more tolerant nor affluent than the world which replaced it.

[1]C.F.Andrews, *Zakaullah of Delhi* (Cambridge, 1929), p.4.
[2]Ibid., pp.6 and 15.

The early years of the nineteenth century were a transitional time in Delhi in which two worlds co-existed; their antithetical natures not yet fully evident. The Kashmiris stood in varying relation to each. Some Pandits remained wholly dependent on court patronage; others began the slow but rewarding process of adaptation to the service of the British.

The nucleus of the Delhi Pandits created in the first years of the Mughal sovereignty expanded at a quickened pace following Afghan occupation of Kashmir. Those who left the valley while the Afghans ruled and came to Delhi seem to have been the wealthier Pandits, who were motivated as much by the desire to save their possessions as their religion. They were often able to build residences in the Bazar Sita Ram of impressive proportions with the money they brought with them to the plains. Close to the lane where Raja Kedar Nath owned enough land to have an alley named after him, Raja Kedar Nath Ki Gali, Jiwan Ram Kaul constructed a mansion with over one hundred rooms paid for with the gold he carried from Srinagar. It was said of Jiwan Ram that he was so rich that he was able to supply a coin minted in any year requested; his nickname, in fact, was 'Mohari'. [3]

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Madan family, whose fortunes would be consolidated in the Lahore Darbar, owned three homes in the Bazar,[4] close to the quarters of Ganga Ram Raina who summoned Raja Dina Nath Madan to the Punjab.[5] The Handoo family's Shish Mahal was located nearby,[6] as was the property of the Haksar family.[7]

Most of the Pandits of the Bazar were connected to the court at the turn of the nineteenth century. Those Pandits who came to Delhi from Kashmir found that the literacy they had acquired in Persian in the valley was instrumental in providing income in the plains.[8]

[3]Interview with Dr P. M. Kaul, August 1979.
[4]Interview with J. N. Madan, Delhi, August 1979.
[5]Interview with Diwan Anand Kumar, Delhi, March 1979.
[6]Interview with G. N. Handoo, Delhi, August 1979.
[7]Interview with R. N. Haksar, March 1979.
[8]Zinda Ram Mubad 'Wajid' was educated in Arabic and Persian and had studied medicine, astronomy and philosophy in Kashmir. Following a dispute with Kashmiri Muslims, however, Zinda Ram went to Delhi where his knowledge enabled him to rise rapidly in Mughal service and acquire extensive *jagirs* from Shah Alam.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, several Delhi court Pandits seem to have amassed considerable wealth.[9] Probably the most affluent Pandit at Shah Alam's court was Raja Mani Ram Zutshi. His estate was estimated to be 14,000 rupees annually. [10]

The East India Company attracted both those families with a tradition of government service and those without. The grasp of the Mughal court culture was subsiding in Delhi long before the events of 1857 finished it off. The early establishment in the city of institutions offering an education in the English language gave the literate elite of Delhi an advantage that was to become fully apparent only after the Rising. Of all the institutions associated with the British, Old Delhi College was the most crucial. It enabled those of the literate elite, who were willing, to participate in the new anglicized world emerging in the capital. The College was founded in 1792 near Ajmeri Gate. As a traditional *madrassa* it offered the conventional Islamicate education.[11] Like the city itself, the College preserved one cultural heritage while gradually introducing a new one that would eventually undermine it. At its height, just prior to the 1857 Rising it had only six students, two of whom were Kashmiri Pandits Mohan Lal Zutshi and Ram Kishen Haksar.[12]

In 1823, the British government sanctioned a grant to the

Connections made through his poetic compositions seem to have been instrumental in his success. Zinda Ram's relative Gobind Ram 'Ziraq' received similar recognition from the Shah for his proficiency in Persian. Royal patronage was also extended to Data Ram Kaul 'Brahman' for his literary endeavours by Mirza Jawan Bakht, heir to Shah Alam, and Khurram Bakht. Daya Ram 'Fida's' literary talents earned him a large land grant in Bihar. *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. 2, p. 523; Vol. 1, pp. 373, 124, and 169.

[9]Kedar Nath and his son Raja Ram Nath 'Zarra' owned vast amounts of property as did the Okhal family. Thakur Das Okhal 'Kamil' and his brother Narain Das Okhal 'Zamir' were prominent in both cultural and political circles in Delhi in the later years of Shah Alam's reign. The former served as vakil between the East India Company and the Mughal Court, the latter was a well known Persian poet. Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 316; Vol. 2, pp. 136, and 965.

[10]Hari Ram Gupta, *Life and Work of Mohan Lal* (Lahore, 1943) Introduction, p. iii.

[11]Andrews, *Zakaullah*, p. 34.

[12]J. H. Garcin de Tassy, *La Langue et la Litterature Hindoustanies de 1850 à 1869; Discours d'Ouverture du Coure d'Hindustani* (Paris, 1874), p. 126.

College and five years later the first English classes were inaugurated by the Commissioner. Shortly thereafter, the College was divided and the English class made independent.[13] The philosophy behind the English contribution was described by C.E. Trevelyan, then First Assistant to the Resident, in his 'Treatise on the Means of Communicating the Learning and Civilization of Europe to India', written in the years between 1830 and 1834.

> The translation of European learning will never make headway against the impenetrable barrier of habit and prejudice backed by the religious feeling afforded by the existing system of Arabic and Sanscrit learning. Only by following a new road can we escape . . .[14]
> Natives naturally look upon English as the government language and regard its adoption in the transaction of public business as a matter of course. I have often heard them speak of it in this manner, and particularly the large class of kayasths and Kashmiris who compose in the Upper Provinces the greater portion of persons employed in the service of government and individuals as secretaries, scribes, etc.[15]

The earliest students at the College formed close connections with their teachers while acquiring mastery of their instructors' language. These assets were rare in north India and consequently assured them of a bright future, as was the intention of the English.

The most effective stimulus for the desired adoption of English by the educated was to make it the language of public business and then to 'give immediate preference in the choice of native officers to those who are masters of the English language.'[16] Thus Trevelyan and various other English officials deliberately pressed the claims for employment of students of the College to the government. Subsidiary activities the students undertook gave them experience which further strengthened their claim to positions in English service. In 1842, for example, a literary society was formed as an adjunct to the school. Its members translated

[13]Andrews, *Zakaullah*, p. 34.

[14]C. E. Trevelyan, *Treatise on the Means of Communicating the Learning and Civilization of Europe to India* (Calcutta, Bengal Harkar, 1834), p, 9. I am indebted to Andrew Webb for the use of his copy.

[15]Ibid., pp. 19–20. Trevelyan adds a reference to the adaptability of the Kashmiris and Kayasths: 'It is remarkable that these same classes were the first to undertake the study of Persian in the time of Akbar.'

[16]Ibid., p. 22.

English works which became the textbooks of later students.[17] Members of the society then went on to secure appointments as translators in various government departments.

The Delhi College was the starting point for several Kashmiri Pandits. Their individual histories illustrate the utility of an early English education—and for at least one, the dangers. Several of the early Pandits who enrolled at the college went on to become instructors themselves. Ajodhia Prasad Gurtu 'Hairat' became assistant professor at the school, as did Ram Kishan Haksar,[18] while Shiv Narain became the first professor of English at Meerut.[19]

Moti Lal Katju 'Bismil', one of the most active members of the literary society, became a government translator and rose to be Mir Munshi to the Punjab Government and Judicial Extra Assistant Commissioner. Moti Lal published his first translation at the age of 19.[20] For the next two decades he produced a variety of translations from Persian classics to technical manuals and government gazettes.[21] At the request of Sir Donald Macleod, he published a pamphlet against female infanticide in 1862; realizing Trevelyan's hope that the students of English culture would become, simultaneously, the heralds of English social values.[22]

C. E. Trevelyan looked with great hope upon another of the Kashmiris, Mohan Lal. Mohan Lal was the great-grandson of Mani Ram Zutshi, one of the wealthiest Pandits at the Mughal court. Zutshi's estate had declined precipitously within two generations of his death. His grandson, Rai Brahm Nath, had had most of his villages seized and others had been sold to reduce the family debt.[23] Rai Brahm Nath enrolled his son Mohan Lal in the first class at the Delhi College in 1828.[24] Mohan Lal attended the school for three years during which time he formed a close relationship with Trevelyan, one of the three Englishmen on the managing committee.[25]

[17]De Tassy, *La Langue*, p. 130.
[18]Ibid., Vols. I, pp. 558–9, and II, pp. 546–7.
[19]Ibid., Vol. III, p. 130.
[20]Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 340–1.
[21]*Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. I, p. 134.
[22]de Tassy, *La Langue*, p. 171.
[23]Chopra, *Mohan Lal*, Introduction, p. iv.
[24]Ibid., p. v.
[25]Mohan Lal's Journal, *Life and Work of Mohan Lal*, ed. Hari Ram Gupta (Lahore, 1943).

To the Englishman, Mohan Lal was the best specimen of a 'race' whose amelioration through an English education would provide evidence of the superiority of British rule. In his introduction to Mohan Lal's journal, Trevelyan wrote: 'In the person of Mohan Lal we prove our qualification for the great mission of regenerating India . . . . What has gained for him the acknowledgement of personal superiority by the princes of Asia and enabled him to enjoy on terms of equality the society of English gentlemen? Simply knowledge of English. This is the cause of Mohan Lal's elevation of character.'[26]

In 1831, Mohan Lal was introduced to Alexander Burnes, then Assistant Resident in Kutch. This was done through the Secretary to the Delhi Resident, a frequent visitor to the College. Burnes, on a prospective journey to central Asia, was in need of an interpreter. He offered the post to Mohan Lal and the Pandit thus became Persian *munshi* to Burnes on an annual salary of 1,000 rupees.[27] For the next few years, the Persian *munshi* led a colourful life, for a time, the most romantic figure in the collective memory of the community. In his autobiography, Jawaharlal Nehru was later to describe him as follows: 'He travelled all over Central Asia and Persia and wherever he went he managed to take a new wife, usually marrying in the highest circles. He visited Europe also and was presented to the young Queen Victoria.'[28]

But life experienced is often different from life recalled. Mohan Lal's career serves to illustrate the pitfalls as well as the rewards of early association with the British. In the end, he was neither 'on terms of equality with the society of European gentlemen', nor with his own community.

The journal of his travels kept by Mohan Lal is interesting less for his adventures than for portrayal of a mind caught between cultures and between the conflicting currents of education and inheritance. The author displayed a certain freedom from those behavioural restraints which are usually associated with orthodox Brahmanical practice, a freedom for which he would later be made to pay. As Trevelyan noted, the journal reveals the author's impatience with the irrational and superstitious

[26]Trevelyan, Introduction *Journal of Mohan Lal*, p. 24 and 27.
[27]Chopra, *Mohan Lal*, p. iii.
[28]Jawaharlal Nehru, *Towards Freedom* (Boston, 1963), p. 14.

trappings of religion. Mohan Lal expressed distaste for the Hindu proclivity to worship pictures of deities and monkeys.[29] 'I am surprised at the foolish prejudices of the Hindus,'[30] he confessed. He ate freely with Muslims, slept in mosques, professed broad tolerance, and felt distressed at the communal intolerance which he encountered in Lahore.[31] Much of this liberality may be ascribed to his Kashmiri background, but it is evident that the college exercised an influence upon his values as well. He later noted, for example, how Bombay Parsis, 'being free from prejudice and more familiar with and attached to the English mode of living, have improved their habits.'[32]

Mohan Lal strove, however, to retain his ties with the Kashmiri community. In Ambala, Ludhiana, Lahore and Peshawar he was received by local Pandits. His own cook was a Kashmiri Brahman of Lahore.[33] But members of the Kashmiri circle of Delhi were not prepared to accept Mohan Lal's successes in the new secular world outside the community. He later recalled with evident bitterness his reception upon returning to Delhi from his travels. 'I was coolly received by my community who became jealous and unkind, in consequence of my fame and treatment from the government. They mention my name unfavourably in my absence but to my face conversed with me in a friendly manner. I did not take notice and always thought of obtaining government patronage by rendering good and faithful service.'[34]

Nevertheless, Mohan Lal thought his English connections would be sufficient compensation for his loss of communal ties. In 1835, several years after his return to Delhi, when his situation still had not improved he wrote to the Government describing his plight. 'I beg to intimate to your honour that since my return to India I have been very coolly treated by my countrymen . . . so I am now left without friends and without a place to reside in my native city of Delhi.[35] The government on this occasion came to the distressed Pandit's assistance, and granted him a house rent free near the Kali Masjid.

[29] Mohan Lal, *Journal,* p.226. [30] Ibid., p. 4. [31] Ibid., p. 8.
[32] Ibid., p. 247. [33] Ibid., pp. 3, 7, 11 and 56.
[34] Ibid., p. 225.
[35] *Agra Political Proceedings,* Range 229, Vol. 53 (10 January 1835), no. 15, dated 10 December.

The dilemmas inherent in being a pioneer in the wider (secular) world while attempting to retain the connection with the narrower (traditional) world found expression in a communication addressed to the government ten months later:

> If I had become a convert to Christianity there would be no necessity for me to conceal this fact and such a solemn act could never remain a secret. Notwithstanding all remonstrances, jealousy and ill will have so strongly wrought upon the . . . people's heart, they have now made a combination to expel and eject me from my caste. I need not observe that this kind of usage will not only hurt the feelings of my poor parents, but will disgrace me before my equals. I therefore do humbly beg that your honor will send an order to the magistrate of Delhi to frustrate the evil designs of this people by an authoritative interposition.[36]

Mohan Lal then went on to request a different house. This time he located himself in Choriwala Bazar, close to the Bazar Sita Ram, the deterioration in his relations with the community notwithstanding. Predictably, the government replied that it was unable to interfere. The dilemma of the Pandit caught between cultures was apparently without resolution.[37]

An article written in the community magazine *Bahar-i-Kashmir* mentions that, toward the end of his life, he became a convert to Islam, 'possibly due to his travels in Muslim countries and because of Muslim wives' and that he took the name Agha Hasan Jan.[38]

The Kashmiri tradition was relatively latitudinous in its definition of the permissible but the expansive boundary of acceptable behaviour seems to have been deceptive. Transgression of community norms could bring swift reaction. The fact that later *generations* of Kashmiris never refer to Mohan Lal seems to confirm the traveller's conversion.

Only when Mohan Lal became a figure of historical interest rather than immediate significance did the community begin to

[36] Ibid., pp. 15-19, Feb. 27.

[37] Ibid., 7 March 1835, nos.5-6

[38] *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir* (July 1940). 'Life of Pandit Mohan Lal Kashmiri' by Hira Lal Chopra. No other source alludes to the conversion, but several Kashmiri Pandits suggested that Mohan Lal may have converted, including Mrs G.N. Handoo, Delhi, August 1979.

resurrect him. But in doing so, it suppressed the fact of his conversion. Thus what occurred was more in the nature of reconstruction than resurrection. What was done showed that there were definite limits to the tolerance of the Kashmiris.

Not all Mohan Lal's Kashmiri classmates at the Delhi College underwent transformations as drastic as his. The history of the Haksar family serves to illustrate the more positive aspects of association with the British.[39]

The earliest known Haksar was one Mahesh in Srinagar in the latter half of the seventeenth century. His great-great-grandsons, Sahib Ram and Sita Ram, came to the plains in 1804. Sahib Ram's grandson, Ram Kishen, was the first Haksar to be enrolled in the Delhi College, and was considered the most intelligent of the six original students at the school.[40] His proficiency in Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit remain clearly evident in the pages of *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir.*

Ram Kishen was successful as a mediator between two worlds, a mediation symbolized appropriately in his role as translator. His published translations included works on science and medicine, finance, political principles, law and legislation (both western and religious), agriculture, English (language) grammar, and philosophy. In a separate category is a brochure written in Devanagri script entitled *Stri Siksha,* or *Advice for Women.*[41]

Ram Kishen lived in the Bazar Sita Ram with his cousin Bishen Narain (1807–1889), (the grandson of Sita Ram and an official in the Delhi Customs adminstration).[42] The children of the cousins attended the Delhi College. They were the second generation of Haksars to do so. Sarup Narain (1828–1903), the third son of Bishen Narain,[43] joined the institution in 1839. By the time he was 18, he too had translated various treatises for the Delhi Vernacular Translation Society[44] and had earned the praise of Francis Taylor, the Headmaster, and from Aloys Sprenger, the Principal of the College.[45] Sarup Narain's two brothers, Dharm Narain and Prem Narain followed their brother at the College. In 1848, Dharm Narain, then a senior in the English Department,

[39] Haksar family tree.
[40] Trevelyan memoir in Mohan Lal, *Journal.*
[41] de Tassy, *Histoire,* pp. 546-7, and *La Langue,* p. 15.
[42] *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir,* Vol. 2, p. 571.
[43] Haksar family tree.
[44] de Tassy, *Histoire,* pp. 546-7.
[45] Testimonials in the Haksar family's possession.

became editor of an Urdu weekly entitled *Qiran-us-Sadyn*. It was one of the many publications produced by the scholars of Delhi College. Its purpose was 'to introduce literature, history and science to the learned natives' of north India.[46]

From Delhi Sarup Narain went to Indore. Here, in 1846, he began his career as a teacher in the Indore Madrasa. By 1849 he had been joined in central India by Dharm Narain, who was editor of the *Malwa Akhbar,* a publication whose patrons were R.N. Hamilton, Agent to the Governor-General, and the Maharaja Holkar.[47]

When Sarup Narain was made Dewan at Bundelkhand in 1856, it was entirely predictable that Dharm Narain would shortly emerge in that state—as its Mir Munshi. By 1857, Sarup Narain was still in Bundelkhand; Dharm Narain was Mir Munshi at Indore, and Prem Narain was Dewan at Tehri.[48]

The British held the Haksars in high regard. This is evident from many testimonials still in the family's possession. Hamilton, in particular, followed the Haksar fortunes with solicitude.[49] Five years after the Pandit's appointment as Mir Munshi, Hamilton praised the 'very creditable and faithful performance of the duties entrusted to you' as the reason for his promotion to Dewan.[50]

Sarup Narain's personal rapport with Hamilton was undoubtedly a factor in his success. A close relationship with an English official, whose willingness to recommend the fortunate Pandit guaranteed future promotions, characterized almost all those Pandits who rose to high appointment under the British after the mid-nineteenth century in the Punjab, north India and in central India. Bishember Nath Sahib read Shakespeare with an English district judge.[51] Lawrence brought up the orphaned son of Raja Suraj Kaul,[52] and Abbott nurtured the career of Daya Nidhan Ganjoo.[53] These relationships were personal as much as political.

[46]*Notes on the Native Press, 1848. Selections from the Records of the Government of the Northwest Provinces and Agra* (1885), p. 243.

[47]*Notes on the Native Press* (1849). p. 249

[48]*National Biography for India,* p. 589.

[49]Letter from R.N. Hamilton to Sarup Narain in the Haksar family's possession, 22 May 1851.

[50]Ibid., 21 July 1856.

[51]*Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir,* Vol. 1, p. 573.

[52]Interview with Raja Upendra Kishen Kaul, Delhi, May 1979.

[53]*Bahar-i-Gulshan-Kashmir,* Vol. 2, p.53.

The insinuation of British officials into the various administrations of north India did not end the patronage system, nor eliminate the importance of personal connections. Only the source of efficacious connections shifted. Those who knew English were a particularly attractive group of applicants for the favours of the new 'lat sahibs'.[54]

The Haksars were able to exploit a conjunction of favourable circumstances. Their knowledge of English coincided with the Company's need for collaborators as it shifted its role more and more from a commercial and military presence to an outright political power. It was possible to take advantage of the shortage of qualified Indians because Kashmiris such as the Haksars functioned as a family forming a chain.

There were several other Kashmiri Pandits who passed through the Delhi College in its formative years, becoming thereby the standard bearers of the anglicized culture taking root in the Mughal capital. They went to localities where the Bengalis had not yet penetrated and English literacy was still considered exceptional. Like Ram Kishen Haksar, they were moulded by European mentors to suit Company requirements. They professed nineteenth-century English values and produced vernacular translations of English works to communicate those values to the people of India.

Delhi College, then, in the years prior to the Rising, was a most profitable place to be. And yet, to many Pandits whose gaze turned habitually toward the Red Fort, seeing it as it was and as it was no longer, Delhi no longer appeared particularly attractive. Well before the mid-nineteenth century, the Kashmiris were leaving the city. This was so despite the fact that the Bazar Sita Ram remained their major settlement in the plains. By 1857, the Kashmiris were beginning to surface in the rudimentary new administrative structures of the native states, employed either for mastery of traditional Persian court forms or the novel English ways.

[54]One wonders about the extent to which being white-skinned was a factor. The skin of the Kashmiris was fair enough for them to be mistaken for British during the Rising.

# CHAPTER VII

# 1857

The effect of the Rising on the Kashmiris was neither momentous or disruptive. The continuity in the fortunes of the Pandits previous to and immediately following the events of 1857 is striking. Those who were in prominent positions emerged with their standing generally intact or enhanced. It is not clear whether the Kashmiris were actually loyal to the British cause or whether they merely appeared to be so. The weight of evidence favours the former interpretation.

The pattern of evident loyalty was almost uniform despite regional diversity and past history. Members of the oldest families in the plains, whose relations with indigenous rulers were of long standing, chose to support the British as well as those individuals whose fate was more recently and clearly tied to the newcomers.

The Bhan family was said to be one of the legendary eleven Pandit families who survived their refusal to convert to Islam. In the early eighteenth century, Jai Ram Bhan had left Kashmir, arrived in Delhi and established himself at the court of Muhammad Shah.[1] It was Jai Ram's appeal to the emperor that had led to the title 'khuaja' being removed from Kashmiri Pandits. Jai Ram's son, Jai Krishan Das, served the Mughals as well. He was assigned to the salt department at Agra, was sent to the Deccan, but for most of his life was employed in Delhi at the department of permits. Jai Krishan's son, Jagat Narain, who was born in 1815, was in the same department. Jai Krishan perished during the Mutiny, shot by the rebels. Jagat Narain was given a high appointment by the British 'in recognition of his father's sacrifice.'[2]

The Madan family of Delhi was similarly affected by the events of 1857,[3] and so was the Munshi family. The first Munshi to be

[1] *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. 1, p. 264. [2] Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 40.

[3] Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 140, and Vol. 1, p. 378; an interview in Delhi with J. P. Madan, August, 1979. The Madans were an old Sita Ram Bazar family whose roots in the

associated with the Mughals was Moti Ram 'Firaq' who was given a *jagir* in Bihar for his services. His descendant Thakur Prasad, according to one source, was employed by the British as Mir Munshi to the Agent to the Governor-General, early in the nineteenth century. The sons of the Mir Munshi, Kalka Prasad and Durga Prasad, were also in the employ of the British, the former as deputy collector in Agra.[4]

The Munshis, too, were faithful to the British, in return for which they received several villages near Mathura, a reward more commensurate with their social standing than with their contribution.

In spite of their loyalty to the British, the older families of Delhi and Agra did not succeed in building upon the advantages secured in 1857. They retained their position in the community, but the British administrative structure offered greater opportunity to those located elsewhere. In the second half of the nineteenth century, Agra and Delhi were less pivotal then the newer cities of the northwestern provinces and Avadh.

For the Pandits of north Indian cities such as Lucknow, opportunities exploited in 1857 led to attainments that surpassed previous accomplishments. Many Pandit families previously associated with the nawabs disassociated themselves in timely fashion; the Lucknowi Pandits conformed to the larger pattern of the community and emerged from the Mutiny with their ties to the British cemented rather than strained.

The ease with which these links to the traditional order were severed by those Kashmiris in court service indicates that the degree to which they felt themselves integrated was minimal. The alacrity with which the old order was abandoned suggests opportunism. It may also be explained as a reflection of the continuing self perception of the Kashmiris as outsiders.

Frequently, loyalty to the British was a natural outcome of a generation of exposure to and close personal ties with English culture. The sympathies of a graduate of the Delhi College, for example, would tend naturally to lie with the English. Avadh,

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plains went back five generations prior to the Mutiny, with one Madan Dehlavi. The British gave office to Janki Nath Madan (1841-1907), whose brother was killed by insurgents in 1857, although he was only 16; once again in respect for the deceased relative of the Kashmiri.

[4] *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. 2, p. 77.

however, lacked the sort of institutions which made intimate intercourse possible. Its resident Pandits had less opportunity to develop the relations with the British that made Kashmiri support of the English cause explicable in the Punjab and the native states.

Shiv Nath Kaul, whose family held *chakladari* rights in Tandiaon for fifty years, was given the estate of Bethar in Unao in return for his disavowal of the rebels.[5] The presentation made Raja Shiv Nath the only recognized Kashmiri Pandit *taluqdar* in Avadh. Following Shiv Nath's death in approximately 1890, the estate was inherited by his widow, Jagat Rani, at which time the revised *jama* of the grant was 4,951 rupees.[6] This income enabled the family to make extensive property purchases in both Unao and in Lucknow. Shiv Nath's son, Sham Sunder Nath, became the community's biggest *zamindar*, an enormous mansion was constructed in the Chaupation area of Lucknow known as Dilaram Bara Dari (referring to the twelve doors of the residence) with a hall in which *mushairas* were held. The land in Unao, lying, by request of the Raja, near the river, contained four Hindu temples;[7] the rural and the urban property mirroring very different facets of the Kashmiri's cultural environment.

The community annals contain the names of many other Pandits in Avadh who received grants of titles, land and positions from the British in exchange for services rendered in 1857. Among them are most of the individuals who dominated community affairs for the next fifty years, such as the Takru family, the Shivpuri[8] family, the Kauls and Ogras.[9]

[5]*Oudh Gazette of 1877*, p. 581.

[6]*List of Taluqdars of Oudh* (Allahabad,Government Press, 1892).

[7]Interview with Amar Nath Kaul, Lucknow, June 1979.

[8]Sahib Ram Takru had come to Delhi from Kashmir at the beginning of the nineteenth century and served as an accountant in the court of Bahadur Shah Zafar, along with Niranjan Nath Shivpuri. His son, Bishember Nath, eventually became a *kazanshi* in Lucknow. He was given several villages near Lucknow for his support of the British, the income from which went toward the construction of a house in Aminabad. Shivpuri's family came from Kashmir at the end of the eighteenth century and gravitated toward the Mughal court where the founder of the lineage was employed as a paymaster of a *khandari* regiment. According to British records, several members of the family received high appointments immediately after annexation and were loyal through 1857. When Maharaj Narain Shivpuri, then a deputy collector in Banaras, was being considered for a Rai Bahadurship, in 1897, this record of loyalty influenced the decision to bestow the title. Takru interview, Allahabad, May 1979; Political File, No. 262a (Sept. 1897), Lucknow, U. P. State Archives.

[9]Sri Kishen Kaul, the son of Ram Chand Kaul and grandson of Maharaj Kaul

Kishen Narain Gurtoo was a settlement deputy collector at Saugor in 1857. From the commencement of the disturbance he exhibited great loyalty. 'He privately talked with respectable persons in the district and explained the absurdity that government should interfere with religion . . . he assuaged the natives and informed the British Government', according to the testimony of the deputy commissioner.[10] Kishen Narain received the title of Rai and three villages in the Kanpur district. When the Rai's son, Inder Narain (1850-1904), acquired the estate, it was worth 10,435 rupees. Inder Narain remained in government service, first as a *munsif* and finally as a subordinate judge.[11]

Not all those Pandits whose families suffered during the Mutiny were able to benefit from it as well. Jai Ram Bahadur, a police inspector in Ghazipur, was shot and killed by rebels but this sacrifice did not lead to any largesse from the government; nor do the files contain any request for a reward from Har Sahai, the late Pandit's son.[12]

The list of loyal Pandits must be considered incomplete. The lists were kept by the victors; thus the Pandits who chose to oppose the British are even less known. In the princely states, the Pandits either disassociated themselves from rebellious chiefs or identified with those who were allies of the British.

Raja Tula Ram of Rewari, for example, was on the side of the rebels.[13] In Bharatput, Colonel Walters stoutly defended the

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Dattatreya, both in the Gwalior state service, had gone to Lucknow where he was a *darogha* under Wajid Ali Shah. He too abandoned the nawab for which he was given 2,000 rupees and an appointment as sub-inspector by the English. Later he was made honorary magistrate and a Rai Bahadur and became a municipal commissioner.

Dina Nath Ogra was offered *jagirs* near Lucknow for his rescue of two Englishwomen. He declined to accept these, requesting instead that he receive an appointment. Thereupon he was made a *tehsildar*. His son, Gopi Nath Karan, who began as a *naib-tehsildar*, rose eventually to a district commisionership. This pattern of continued upward mobility in the post-Mutiny generation was a typical one.

*Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. 2, p. 702; *Manual of Titles, Oudh*, (Allahabad, Govt. Press, 1899), p. 116; interview with Janak Dulari (Ogra) Kaul and Shiv Dulari (Ogra) Watil, Allahabad, May, 1979; see, for instance, *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. 2, p. 822

[10] *Manual of Titles, Northwestern Provinces*, 1900, p. 17.

[11] Ibid., *U.P. and Agra*, 1931,p. 87.

[12] *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. 1, p. 331.

[13] Ibid., p. 397.

interests of the Ganjoo family out of gratitude to Jawahar Lal Ganjoo, Sardar of the state. The Colonel secured for Lalji Parasad an appointment as *peshkar,* while another son of Jawahar Lal was given a position in the police department.[14]

This was one of many examples of personal ties between Kashmiri Pandits and British officials which was strengthened by the 1857 Rising.[15]

In later years, during the height of the nationalist agitation, their grandfathers' loyalty to the British would become a source of embarrassment to many Kashmiris. Onkar Nath Kaul would tear up the *sanad* which recorded how the British had paid tribute to the loyalty of his great-grandfather Har Narain Kaul, then *kotwal* in Gwalior. What had been celebrated as loyalty was later to be reinterpreted as servility.

But the events of 1857 did not play a significant role in the collective memory of the community. There is none of the terrible nostalgia for pre-Mutiny Delhi which could be found among other classes of Mughal court servants whose homes had once been located in the narrow lanes that formed, along with the Bazar Sita Ram, the heart of Shahjahanabad. The events which have come to delineate the somewhat arbitrary boundary between two political orders and two very different worlds do not seem to have played a decisive role in the history of Kashmiri Pandits.

While the Muslims of old Delhi were composing their *shahr ashobs* mourning the passage of easier times and better days, Pandits were too busy either acquiring the confiscated property of Muslim aristocrats or departing from Delhi for the new centres of political life in north India. The Mutiny is recalled by Kashmiri Pandits' descendants more as event than as a symbol. Its legacy holds tales of disguise and buried treasure and flight, rather than of great lamentation.

[14] *Bharatpur Affairs*, Foreign Department, 1894, No. 58, Statement No. 2.

[15] Interview with S.N. Mulla, April 1979, Allahabad; *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. 2, pp. 52-3; *Dictionary of Indian Biography*, p. 2.

CHAPTER VIII

# The Native States of Central India and Rajputana

The manner in which the events of 1857 served to confirm rather than alter the close relationship between official Pandits and the English authorities (thereby fortifying the Kashmiri position in local society), emerges in an examination of the fortunes of those Pandits in states service in the post-1857 period.

The relationship was a mutually profitable one. The British were in need of indigenous collaborators to carry out the systematization of administration; collaborators responsive to them rather than native authorities. As outsiders, the Kashmiris lacked ties of loyalty to the local power structure. In a sense they were mercenary civilians, their *dharm* was to implement not to initiate. By tradition they were government servants; by education, English literates.

The history of the Haksar family best illustrates the deepening ties between the Kashmiris and the British. The Haksars emerged from the events of 1857 with renewed favour in the eyes of the English and a much strengthened economic position by which, in turn, their standing in the community was reinforced. The Rising did not lead to the establishment of the family, but because the Haksars were well placed prior to it, they were able to effectively exploit the opportunities it offered them.

By 1857, three of Bishen Narain's four sons were in high positions in the service of the British; Dharm Narain as Mir Munshi to the Agent to the Governor-General for central India, Prem Narain as Diwan of Tehri, and Sarup Narain as Diwan of Bundhelkhand. The family's centre of gravity remained, however, in the Bazar Sita Ram in Delhi, where the patriarch continued to reside with his youngest son, Kanhaya Lal, his cousin, Ram Kishen, an instructor

at the Delhi College, and Ram Kishen's son, Pran Narain, who was then 19 and a student at the College.

Sarup Narain was at Indore throughout the turbulence, and 'did not quit his post', while Prem Narain assisted English officers who fled Lalitpur and took refuge in Tehri. 'For his service [he] received marks of approbation of the Governor-General such as are seldom bestowed on a private individual,' noted H.M. Durand, then Agent to the Governor-General for central India.[1]

Unfortunately, the September day the British began their reoccupation of Delhi, Ram Kishen and another relative, Jiya Lal, were inadvertently shot and killed by English soldiers as they attempted to secure passes to leave the city safely. The next day, Bishen Narain and his son, Kanhaya Lal, left for Alwar, where a number of Pandits were employed in the court of Balwant Singh. In early December, the Pandit returned to the capital, where he received the protection of the English authorities.[2]

The immunity granted the Kashmiri was the result of importunings on his father's behalf by the Mir Munshi, Dharm Narain. In a letter Durand wrote at the Pandit's request to Delhi, the Agent expressed the high regard the British had for the family.[3]

Although the Haksars were unable to save their property from massive looting by English soldiers, their influence enabled them to obtain two lakhs in compensation from the authorities.[4] The economic instability made it possible, moreover, for the family to acquire property at bargain rates. When land confiscated from the allegedly traitorous was put up for sale, land in the Sarak Prem Narain, a street in the Bazar Sita Ram, was promptly purchased by Bishen Narain for 5,000 rupees. There were now two substantial Haksar residences in the area, Rang Mahal and Shish Mahal. In addition to these, the family acquired land grants in north India.[5]

In spite of the expanded property holdings in north India, the nucleus of the family shifted to the central Indian states. The orphaned Pran Kishen arrived in Indore where his cousin, Sarup Narain, obtained a post for him as teacher and editor of an Urdu

[1]Letter from H.M. Durand to Offg. Commissioner of Delhi, 2 November 1857, in the Haksar family's possession.

[2]Letter from C.B. Saunders, Offg. Commissioner of Delhi to Durand, 9 December 1857.

[3]Letter from Durand to Saunders, 2 November 1857.

[4]Interview with Rajender Haksar, Delhi, March 1979.

[5]Interview with Rajen Haksar Nehru (Mrs R. K. Nehru), Allahabad, April 1979.

periodical. Here he remained for 13 years, at which time he was appointed tutor to the daughter of the Begum of Bhopal upon the recommendation of Sir Robert Hamilton.[6] Kanhaya Lal also left Delhi at this time. He went to Gwalior, where his elder brother Dharm Narain had been newly appointed tutor to the Maharaja, and became a magistrate.[7]

Immediately following the reimposition of the Angrezi Raj, Sarup Narain was assigned to put the financial and administrative affairs of several native states in order. Before the Mutiny, he had been entrusted with the muddled accounts of the dowager Rani of Maharaja Jankoji Rao Sindhia in Shajapur; he was now given those of Dhar, Barwani, and Jhansi,[8] from which, according to his descendants, he made a handsome profit.[9]

Conditions post-1857 hastened the pace of Sarup Narain's promotions. By 1865, the Pandit was appointed Native Assistant to the Agent of the Governor-General[10] once again replacing his old Delhi College classmate Shaukat Ali. Seven years later, he was promoted Second Assistant[11] and in 1876, he was recommended for the graded list of political officers.[12] Public honours as well as political eminence were bestowed on Sarup Narain, culminating in a C.I.E. in 1880.[13]

Sarup Narain retired with a special additional pension in 1883.[14] At this time, the only other Indian to have risen to an equivalent eminence in central India was his brother, Dharm Narain.

The Haksars were able to prosper because the family's requirements corresponded with those of the expanding Raj; the relationship between the Kashmiris and the English was a symbiotic one.

Elaboration, if not rationalization, of bureaucracy was a constant theme of later nineteenth-century central Indian history.

[6]*Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir,* Vol. 2, p. 571.
[7]Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 370
[8]Interview with M.N. Haksar, Delhi, August 1979.
[9]H. Daly, Agent to the Governor-General, to Secretary, Government of India, 21 January 1880.
[10]Letter from R. J. Meade, Agent to the Governor-General, 20 June 1865, Haksar family.
[11]Letter from C.U. Aitchison, Secretary, Government of India, 16 August 1872, Haksar family.
[12]Agent to the Governor-General, to Secretary, Government of India, 2 December 1875.
[13]A.C. Lyall, Secretary, to S.N. Haksar, 30 April 1880.
[14]Secretary of State for India to Government of India, 31 October 1883.

British rule remained indirect, for the most part, in the states of Gwalior and Indore, where the Haksars had their base, but the governments of the two states were nevertheless altered to conform to the model Anglo-Indian governmental structure. In the states, as in British India, previous models of government and ruling-class culture lost their sway.

Whatever their recent past, whether Mughal, Maratha, or nawabi, the general tendency in the north and central Indian states was to move away from this past to a political system standardized to a British-imposed pattern. Thus in Gwalior, where the administration had been organized on the Poona model, a *majlis khas*, or a council of ten members, each of whom was in charge of a clearly defined administrative department, replaced the looser traditional system headed by *diwan*, *farnavis*, and *patnis*.[15]

Justice, *jagirdars* and *ijaradars*, theoretically guided by the *shastras*, was similarly regularized.[16]

In 1858, the capital city of Gwalior, Lashkar, was still said to have the appearance of an immense village. The only impressive structure in the capital was the Moti Mahal. The Mahal had been built in imitation of the palace of the peshwa in Poona and housed the state offices, also arranged on the Poona model.[17] The new palace, the Jai Vilas, was constructed in 1874 and was based on a new model. 'It has the general plan of an Italian palazzo', commented the *Gazetteer* without enthusiasm. 'Unfortunately, it is disfigured by the incongruous mingling of European and Indian styles.'[18]

The changing constructions symbolized larger social and political transformations; the impressive dimensions of the Darbar Hall testified to the increasing importance of ceremonial for the ruler of the state.[19] The British presence was apparent in the museum, the Elgin Club, and the Victoria College, established in 1877.[20]

The prosperity of at least some urban residents was reflected in the *saravar*, or bankers' quarters; the only area, according to the authors of the *Gazetteer*, with pretensions. 'The houses are in bad taste,' observed Luard and Shivpuri. 'Italian filials and balustrades mingle with exquisite native stonework.'[21]

[15]C.E. Luard and D.N. Shivpuri (a Pandit), *Gwalior Gazette*, p. 89.
[16]Ibid., pp. 89 and 92.
[17]Ibid., p. 256.
[18]Ibid., p. 257.
[19]Ibid., p. 258. [20]Ibid., p. 257. [21]Ibid.

Both the western-style institutions and the prominence of bankers' residences were a new feature of the Indian urban landscape. The English influence had been evident for some time; the strength of the commercial element was just emerging.

'The customs of the state have changed in the last 30 to 40 years,' Luard noted. 'Western education has affected dress, food, life, and even marriage.' Luard quoted a proverb to explain this phenomenon: 'Yatha raja, tatha praja,—as does the ruler, so do the people.'[22] This meant, in central India, a move toward a more anglicized ruling-class culture.

Despite the transformation to which the Englishman alluded, repudiation of the past here was not as dramatic as it was in other parts of India. Nor did change necessarily entail modernization of the political culture. The ceremonial, ritualistic elements of political authority were emphasized in a manner which invoked rather than ignored the past. The state army atrophied but at the Dussera Darbar, the Maharaja, witnessed by the entire court, proceeded to a field (actually located in front of the Victoria College) where he worshipped arms.[23] Similarly, the Maratha influence was diminished, Hindi rather than Marathi became the court language for most correspondence,[24] but Deccani saints continued to be honoured by the Sindhias.[25] And the Maharaja continued to be a symbol of unity for the whole of society, participating in Muslim as well as Hindu festivals.[26]

The administrative re-organization which Indore experienced was similar to that of Gwalior, bringing with it expanded opportunity for mobile government servants such as the Kashmiris. The Haksars participated in the process by which the state was brought into at least apparent conformity with British norms.[27]

The city of Indore had a longer history and greater economic importance than did Lashkar; it was a major trade centre for opium and grain. It boasted the usual accoutrements of the English presence; to the east of the railway tracks bifurcating the city after 1875, stood Holkar College and Tukoganj, where state officials maintained their residences.[28]

[22]Ibid. [23]Ibid. [24]Ibid., p. 90.

[25]Ibid., p. 259.

[26]Interview with Brigadier S. Dar, Delhi, August 1979.

[27]C.E. Luard, *Indore State Gazetteer* (Calcutta, Government Printing Office, 1908), pp. 140, 141.

[28]Ibid., p. 46.

The Pandit communities of both Gwalior and Indore registered growth in the second half of the nineteenth century. Most frequently the Pandits were to be found in those positions requiring a degree of literacy in English. The line between the two states from the perspective of mobile government servants, was a permeable one. Individuals shifted from employ in one state to the other. Newcomers among the Kashmiris were generally brought to central India by the Haksar family who had bases in both states.[29]

The Haksar family seems to have recruited Pandits from north India very deliberately and selectively. Tej Narain Dar, for example, was from a Lucknow family of no great wealth. But he was known in the community as an outstanding scholar and was encouraged to come to Gwalior by Dharm Narain Haksar.[30] He eventually married the daughter of Pran Nath Raina, a fellow resident of Lucknow who had come to Gwalior, opened the first school for women, and eventually became principal of Victoria College.[31]

The Kashmiri communities of the two states were both expansive and stable in the second half of the nineteenth century. Those who served in the states usually took their wives there, and when their wives gave birth it was in central India rather than in the cities of north India.

State service tended to be hereditary.[32] The Kashmiris' first positions in Gwalior and Indore were based on a combination of connections and education. Many started as teachers or translators. Later, there was a heavy concentration of Pandits in the customs and excise administration; Shiv Nath Kaul, the son of Kashi Nath, *naib dewan* in Banaras, became the superintendent of customs and excise[33] and employed several Pandits including Chand

[29]Following his marriage to a Haksar, Radha Kishen Gurtoo departed the Bazar Sita Ram and settled in Gwalior. All four sons of Radha Kishen remained in Gwalior and were in state service. Radhe Nath Zutshi too left Delhi upon wedding a Haksar. One son, Brij Kishore, born in 1864, became a judge in Gwalior, another son, Autam Narain, first served as a *faujdar* in Indore and then in Gwalior. *Indore State Gazetteer*, pp. 135-42. *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. 2, pp. 784, 508.

[30]Interview with Brigadier S. Dar, Delhi, August 1979. Kashmiri students whose performance was exceptional were frequently helped by the most prominent members of the community; high marks in exams often occasioned offers of aid.

[31]Testimony of Pran Nath, Educational Commission, 1882, p. 470.

[32]*Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. 2, pp. 4, and 933.

[33]Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 497 and Vol. 3, p. 336.

Narain Raina,[34] whose brother Suraj Narain was superintendent of the government press,[35] and Onkar Nath Dar, offspring of the Dar family of Jaora.[36]

While not all the Pandits residing in central India owed their presence there to the Haksars, the family, nevertheless, seemed to set the cultural style and lead community activities in Indore and Gwalior. In part because of the cultural preferences of the Haksars, activities characteristic of the Pandits in north India were absent from community gatherings in central India, or less important. *Mushairas* in Gwalior, for example, were held at the home of Ajodhia Prasad Munshi, a member of an old Delhi and Agra family[37] whose connections with the Mughal court were far more intimate than those of the Haksars, who were associated with the English institutions of the capital. With the exception of Dharm Narain's son, Har Narain, a translator at the Indore residency,[38] the Haksars did not generally produce Persian poetry. Moreover, in central India, the official language was Hindusthani written in either Balbodh or Devanagri characters, supplemented to a limited extent by English and Marathi. Persian and Urdu therefore were of little instrumental value, and literacy in English came to characterize the Pandits of central India both in public and in private.

Hindus dominated the state and Hindu ideals suffused the local court culture. 'The influence of Hindu surroundings on local Muslims is noticeable in the customs relating to marriage, food and dress. Muslims shave their beards, wear Hindu jewelry, dhotis, and pagris, (while) the influence of Muslims on Hindus is not so marked.'[39]

The state administration was dominated by Deccani Brahmans who tended, like the Kashmiris, to be educated and urban. It was these migrants who set the prevailing norms; indigenous Brahmans, whose native language was Malwi, frequently learned Marathi, as did incoming Kanauji Brahmans from Hindusthan.

But none of these latter Brahmans had been exposed to English

[34]Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 199 and interview with B.L. Raina, Delhi, August 1979.
[35]*Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. 2, p. 676 and interview with B.L. Raina.
[36]Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 180 and interview with Inder Dar, Lucknow, May 1979.
[37]Ibid.
[38]Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 748 and interview with Mrs R. K. Nehru, Allahabad, April 1979.
[39]*Indore State Gazetteer*, p. 47.

language and culture to the extent the Kashmiris were. When the Pandits arrived in central India, they were marked by their greater familiarity with both English and Englishmen. But this literacy in English was accompanied by a stress on the Hindu elements in their identity, rather than the Mughal component, in deference to local ideals.

The degree to which the Haksars, in particular, chose to identify with the Hindu religious tradition was marked. Part of the compensation received by Bishen Narain in the aftermath of the Mutiny was invested in the sort of religious patronage not usually undertaken by the Kashmiri Pandits. A trust was established from which funds were earmarked for the construction of a temple in Mathura, completed in 1870. The temple proved a lucrative as well as a pious undertaking; the complex eventually included thirty-six shops whose income went toward the expenses of the temple and a twenty-room *dharmsala.*[40] Bishen Narain was personally a Krishna devotee; the *mandir* was dedicated to Krishna, rather than to Shiva, the deity most Kashmiris worshipped. Bishen Narain used his knowledge of Persian to compose verses in praise of Krishna, which he had printed in a booklet entitled 'Madhurj Krishan Lila.'[41]

Other Kashmiri Pandits displayed a religious disposition, but the extent to which the Haksar practice was more in line with general orthodox practice than the Kashmiri standard is unusual. The family attributes their religious style to intellectual preferences; however, they consciously fostered the perception in central India, that they were Brahmans.[42]

The Kak family was associated with the state of Jodhpur in Rajasthan in much the same fashion as the Haksars were linked with the states of central India. Early fluency in English provided an initial opening which the Kashmiris widened by the recruitment of other Pandits. Once again, the Kashmiri position in the state was

[40]Interview with M. N. Haksar, Delhi, August 1979.

[41]*National Biography for India*, p. 497.

[42]When Kailas Narain Haksar, grandson of Dharm Narain, was in the service of Gwalior, the Maharani would rise to her feet out of respect for a Brahman, and when she gave birth, she sent his wife certain gold ornaments, this being the expectation of Brahmans. Interview with K. N. Haksar's daughter, Mrs. R. K. Nehru, Allahabad, May 1979

strengthened by the evident regard of the British. Here, as elsewhere in India, the Kashmiri Pandit was considered intelligent, enlightened, and disinterested.

In 1848, two years after Shiv Narain Haksar took up his initial appointment in the Indore Madrasa, Shiv Narain Kak departed from Delhi to become an English instructor in the capital of the largest state in Rajasthan. By 1866 he had become the head of the fledgling criminal court of Marwar and private secretary to the Maharaja, Takht Singh.[43] The English thought him the best official in the state.[44] Kak remained private secretary to the ruler until his death in 1892. By this time he might have contemplated with satisfaction the establishment of an impressive bureaucratic lineage in Jodhpur.

In the early years of Shiv Narain's tenure in Rajasthan, both Jaipur and Jodhpur were a source of considerable distress to the British. The 1865 administration report described the latter as 'the worst administrated state in Rajputana.' Takht Singh, the British lamented, was extremely susceptible to the influence of the *zanana* and the *jotishis*, particularly one Hans Raj, who 'assures His Highness he has the power to forecast the future and entirely omits the truth about the present.'[45]

The primitive level of the state administration was comparable to that in central India. Until 1873 no records were formally kept in Jodhpur.[46] Prior to 1885 there was no general treasury.[47] The Maharaja spent his money in advance, assigning his accounts to a banker in Ajmer on whom he would draw for expenses, supplying the banker with interest upon demand.[48]

The English sought to bring this governmental structure to 'an approximation of the regular Anglo-Indian model'.[49] Their first step in this campaign was to induce the rulers of Rajput native states to adopt English rather than the vernacular in communications with the Government of India. In 1864, when the Maharaja of Jaipur was approached, he replied that he was willing to adopt English 'as soon as he could secure the services of officials with

[43]Crown Representatives Records, *Foreign Dept. Procdgs.*, January 1904, No. 5, (R/1/1/300).

[44]*Political Administration Report for Marwar*, 1866, p. 45

[45]Ibid., 1865, p. 45. [46]Ibid., 1872-1900, pp. 116—18.

[47]*Western Rajputana District Gazetteer*, Jodhpur (1909), p. 133.

[48]Ibid., p. 141. [49]Ibid., p. 134.

better education and more fit knowledge of English than those currently in his service.'[50] No reply could have found a more receptive hearing. Shortly thereafter, the local Political Agent noted the formation of an office to foster the English language, and in 1866 wrote. 'I can report most favourably on the introduction of the new system.'[51]

In Jodhpur as well the British sponsored the spread of the English language. In 1868, a weekly newspaper, the *Marwar Gazette*, was inaugurated written in both Hindi and English.[52] The following year, an Anglo-vernacular school under the control of the Political Agent, then E. C. Impey, was opened.[53] Accompanying these developments, the English encouraged the importation of indigenous officials with 'more fit knowledge of English'. By 1865, Colonel J. E. Nixon wrote of one such figure: 'His long residence at Jodhpur and acquaintance with English fits him as a medium of communication in all delicate matters with the Darbar and I recommend him to the protection of my successors.'[54] He was referring, of course, to Pandit Shiv Narain.

The British representation of political conflict in Marwar was that of a stalemated tug-of-war between officials and Thakurs while, less openly, the prospering bankers and traders of the state pulled the governmental strings for their own ends. The introduction of outside officials further complicated factional struggles. Mardan Ali Khan was summoned from the North-western Provinces to reorganize efficient finances. He brought along a number of officials from north India to assist him in the task. They soon collided with traditional servants of the state who were determined to resist displacement. Surveying the disputes, the English concluded 'there is no chance of the local officials pulling on with outsiders' and noted, additionally, that their introduction was widening the gap between the Maharaja and his subjects.[55] According to the 1879 *Gazetteer*, the most influential families in Jodhpur were Oswal Jains followed by Asopa Brahmans.[56] Fifteen

[50] *Administration Report*, 1866, p. 35.
[51] Ibid.
[52] *Western Rajputana Gazetteer*, p. 166.
[53] Ibid.
[54] CRR *Foreign Dept. Proceedings*, January 1904, Sub. Encl. No. 5, Pro. No. 5.
[55] *Administration Report for 1871-1872*, p. 118.
[56] *Jodhpur District Gazetteer*, 1879 (C. K. M. Walters), pp. 248-9.

years later, among the ten individuals whose names appeared on the official list were three Kayasthas and one Kashmiri Pandit.[57]

In spite of the on-going tensions between traditional local officials and the newcomers, the British continued to depend on foreign assistants. These were forced to balance the competing claims of the Angrezi Raj and the Maharaja. The dimensions of the task tended to be underestimated by political agents who chose not to dwell on the incompatability of the goals of imperial and native state governments.

Part of Shiv Narain's success was his ability to satisfy both. English officials consistently portrayed the Pandit as faithful to the interests of the Raj and the Darbar as if there was perfect harmony between the two. Thus Colonel John C. Brooke, Agent to the Governor-General for Rajasthan, wrote in 1873, 'I have always reposed implicit trust and confidence in him and the Maharaja has always done the same.'[58]

Rather than Shiv Narain's loyalty to the Darbar, the British were acknowledging his representation of *their* interests to the Darbar. Colonel Brooke piously noted that the Kashmiri 'has always endeavoured to carry out the policy indicated to him by the Political Agents and has invariably been on the side of good government to which he has conscientiously endeavoured to guide His Highness.'[59] Sir Edward Bradford, a later Agent to the Governor-General, concurred.

The gratitude of the English authorities was earned for such actions as the role of Shiv Narain in securing the Maharaja's consent for various economic concessions. One third of the Khalsa revenue of Jodhpur, for example, was derived from the salt extracted from Sambher Lake on the Jaipur border. It provided the principal source of Darbari income. But in 1870 the British took over the Jaïpuri share of the lake and that same year Takht Singh was persuaded to lease the salt from the Jodhpur side to the English, a most valuable concession.[60]

[57] *Chiefs and Leading Families of Rajputana* (Calcutta, Government Printing Office, 1894), p. 12. (Of the ten one is a Charan, one a Brahman, one a Bandhari Jain and one a Mahajan. The other two names are uncertain.)

[58] *Foreign Dept.Prcdgs.*, January 1904, No. 5.

[59] Ibid.

[60] *Political Administration Report*, 1869-1870, p. 77.

If command of the English language and support of English policy secured Shiv Narain the favour of the British, that very 'estimation' and his status as an outsider (therefore distanced from the intrigues of the ruler's traditional rivals), induced the Maharaja to regard the Pandit kindly. Both Takht Singh and his successor Jaswant Singh bestowed *jagirs* on their private secretary. When Shiv Narain died in 1892, additional *jagirs* were sanctioned in appreciation of his memory.[61] That memory was perpetuated in the employment extended to the Pandit's three sons and his three sons-in-law.[62]

The Kak family tradition of contributing to a more effective system for the extraction of revenues was continued by Shiv Narain's son, Sukh Deo Prasad, who carried out the state land settlement and the conversion of the Jodhpuri coinage.[63] Other members of the family served the state as well. Their jobs too were inherited by their sons so the second generation of Kashmiris found themselves in a cosy network.[64]

But greater security of position was offset by lesser viability as the difficulty of balancing the competing claims of Darbar and Raj increased. This was partly the result of the Thakurs uniting with the Maharaja in opposition to the outsiders. In 1903, Sukh Deo Prasad became the target of these allied forces.[65] The charge was nepotism.

The Agent to the Governor-General was inclined to view the charge lightly. 'In 28 years I have never known a native officer so little open to the charge of nepotism,' wrote A. H. Martindale.[66]

[61]Ibid., Procdg. 5 (taken from Aitchison's *Treaties*, p. 157).

[62]Interview with Shiv Narain's descendant, S. N. Katju, Allahabad, April 1979.

[63]Nirmala M. Upadhyaya, *Administration of Jodhpur State 1800-1947* (Jodhpur, 1973), p. 69.

'A decade before the only college in Jodhpur, Jaswant College, was launched, he obtained his bachelor's degree from Calcutta, a reflexion of the extent to which Kashmiri hereditary pursuits were maintained regardless of a lack of institutional supports in the immediate environment. He was dispatched to the Punjab to study settlement techniques, where he impressed the officer in charge with his pleasant manners and great intelligence'. Sukh Deo was soon promoted to Judicial Secretary, then Superintendent of Jails, and finally to senior membership on the Mekhma Khas, or Council, of Marwar. *Foreign Dept. Procdg*. 5

[64]Interview with S. N. Katju, Allahabad, April 1979.

[65]C. R. R., *Foreign Dept. Prcdgs*., 6 October 1903.

[66]Ibid., 23 October 1903.

Far removed from the scene, the Viceroy, then Lord Curzon, was inclined to sacrifice the Pandit. 'It would be undesirable for [His Highness] to be associated with a minister whom he appeared so cordially [although unreasonably] to dislike.'[67] But all the officials in Rajasthan itself argued that the Kashmiri was indispensible.[68]

What had happened simply was that the traditional élite had learned the new bureaucratic language and value system and had used it to entrap the new bureaucratic élite. The bestowal of offices upon hereditary bureaucratic lineages had been accepted traditional practice. This from the perspective of the British, however, was the undesirable practice of nepotism, and to the extent the new administrative élite practised it, they were vulnerable. The campaign was cogent but ultimately not efficacious.[69]

The affair did much to reveal the dependence of the British upon certain individuals, a dependence the Resident considered excessive. 'I am inclined to think there is too much weight on the shoulders of Pandit Sukh Deo, whose work, although not overwhelming to a man of his calibre, is more than any one man should have . . .'.[70]

The British had defended Sukh Deo Prasad, but only reluctantly.

The medium of the Kashmiris' introduction to the administration of the Jat state of Bharatpur was Shiv Prasad Kaḱ, uncle of Sukh Deo Prasad. When Balwant Singh, the Maharaja of Bharatpur, died in 1853, a Council of Regency was formed to preside over official affairs during the minority of the heir, Jaswant Singh. Shiv Prasad, then Mir Munshi to the Political Agent in Ajmer, was sent by the British to Bharatpur shortly thereafter.[71] His arrival was followed almost immediately by that of his son, Brij Nath 'Diwana' who took up an appointment as *naib-serrishtadar*.[72]

Shiv Prasad seems to have functioned as a one-man managing

[67]Ibid., Jan. 1904, Letter from Curzon dated 20 August 1903.
[68]Ibid., Sept. 1903, No. 328, p. 5.
[69]Ibid.
[70]Ibid.
[71]*Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. 2, p. 458.
[72]Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 310.

agency for Kashmiris.[73] In 1855, Shiv Prasad then brought his son-in-law, Jia Lal Watal, to Bharatpur where he was made a *tehsildar*.[74]

The next generation of Kashmiris was solidly entrenched in the state administration. By the second half of the nineteenth century, the Watil family, led by Jia Lal and Bishen Lal, formed the nucleus of a large Kashmiri community in the employ of the state, a community whose constituent families had been associated with Bharatpur for three generations.

Second and third generation Kashmiris acquired positions through both maternal and paternal connections; all their elders were in official employment within the state. It is not clear when the Kashmiris attained peak employment in the Bharatpur administration, but during the minority of Jaswant Singh (1853–71), the English enumerated almost forty Pandits and the list was by no means comprehensive.[75]

Bishen Lal Watil, appointed Vakil of the Agency in 1874, member of the Council and ultimately Prime Minister of Bharatpur, was at the apex of the community pyramid. The British approved of most of the Kashmiris in Bharatpur. Jia Lal was said to be 'the only man of education and intelligence on the Council.'[76] When the Prime Minister's cousin, Ratan Lal, was brought into the state from the North-western Provinces where he had been a deputy collector, to carry out a new land settlement, the Resident, N. C. Martinelli found the Pandit 'quiet, well-educated and very useful in the state', in contrast to the excitable, boorish Thakurs.[77]

The British regard for the Pandits was partly a reflection of their dependence upon them. Outsiders were far more likely to implement desired changes, but even if the British had been desirous of recruiting local officials they would have had difficulty finding qualified applicants. The Thakurs were not slow to perceive the intimate relationship between the British and the outside bureaucrats and the extent to which that alliance threatened their own access to resources. The conflict between Thakurs and Kashmiris

[73]Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 458.
[74]C. R. R. *Foreign Dept. Prcdgs.*, August 1905, No. 39-111, Statement No. 6.
[75]Ibid. The *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir* includes several pandits that the British overlooked.
[76]Ibid., No. 51 of August 1895.
[77]Ibid.

reached its climax in 1894. Bharatpur was not a Rajput state; there was 'no aristocracy of birth and lineage corresponding with a dominant clan family.'[78]

Officials and Thakurs tended, therefore, to engage in more direct competition than in other native states.

Maharaja Jaswant Singh's death in 1893 precipitated the showdown between the Thakurs and the Kashmiri Pandits. Jaswant Singh was succeeded by his eldest son, Ram Singh. Upon his accession, the new Maharaja distributed *khilats* and it was dissatisfaction with their share that led the Thakurs to open protest.

In September 1894, a petition was sent to the Viceroy from a group of discontented Thakurs, alleging that the subjects of Bharatpur were 'suffocating under the oppression of the Kashmiris that have arrogated to themselves unbounded power.'[79] The campaign launched by the Thakurs and the Maharaja was a skilful one. Much of the grievance was derived from the increasing lack of autonomy of the local powers. This was of course the product of the English presence in the state. But the Thakurs and Ram Singh were too astute to challenge the Political Agent directly—and too weak. The Kashmiris were more vulnerable.

Outside publicity complicated the task of the Resident in his defence of the Kashmiris. Martinelli was decidedly unsympathetic to the cause of the Thakurs and the Maharaja. He explained to his superiors that the petition-writing had been instigated by one Ram Narain, a local *tehsildar* who had been excluded from a seat on the state council and blamed the Pandits for that exclusion. 'It is quite apparent,' wrote the Resident, 'that there is no complaint against the Kashmiris, but that some [Thakurs] jealous of Pandit Bishen Lal were responsible.'[80]

Martinelli was forced nevertheless to admit the performance of the Pandits was not entirely innocent. 'I am afraid the family used their position to pay off old scores,' he admitted. The affair ultimately ended with both sides conceding defeat, while the English noted in dismay the departure of the only man the Agent considered to have intelligence and ability from the Council. 'With Bishen Lal's resignation the Council is useless,' he concluded.[81]

[78]Brereton, *Rajputana Gazetteer*, p. 147.
[79]C. R. R. *Foreign Dept. Procdg.*, No. 51, Aug. 1895, Sept. 1894.
[80]Ibid., No. 54, 22 August 1894.
[81]Ibid., No. 88, 23 January 1895.

Two weeks later, Trevor recommended to the Government that the Political Agent be made president of the Council. This was a less desirable alternative than previous arrangements; the British preferred a more discreet, indirect presence in the native states, influencing policy through receptive native officials. The fact that the English were forced to take an active role in state affairs for lack of a qualified indigenous official alternative to the Kashmiris indicates the utility of the Pandits to the Raj.

Despite the adoption of a more public role in Bharatpur, the British could contemplate the turn of events with some satisfaction. The use of outside officials had already served to reduce the power of the factious Thakurs and the fatuous Maharaja; by the time the Kashmiris were ousted, the significant battles had already been fought and the important changes implemented. And the Maharaja who originally protested his exclusion from the exercise of power by the Kashmiri clique found himself far more isolated after their departure.

On numerous occasions, the British had denounced traditional courtiers for their corruption and jobbery. Yet these qualities in the Kashmiris did not dismay them because in other spheres they functioned according to the wishes of the Raj. 'I am not prepared to say whether the complaints are well-founded or not,' said the Agent to the Governor-General of Bishen Lal.[82] The British were willing to defend the Pandits—but only up to a point.

The Kashmiris were always viewed as outsiders and as tools of the British. That perceived connection was the source of both their strength and their vulnerability. The Maharaja stated that he was 'induced' by Martinelli to hire Bishen Lal and that the power of the Prime Minister stemmed from the fact that he was 'the medium of communication between the Political Agent and the State and fully enjoyed the Political Agent's confidence.'[83]

The status of Kashmiris as outsiders could be, in itself, objectionable; it facilitated their dismissal when objections to the Pandits became vociferous. The ultimate British commitment was to order, not to officials. The indispensability of the Kashmiris had its limits.

[82]Ibid., August 1895, No. 88. Agent of the Governor-General to the Secretary, Government of India, 23 January 1895.

[83]Ibid., No. 68. Letter from Ram Singh to the Viceroy, 13 November 1894.

It is difficult to generalize about the Pandits who served in the states and differentiate them from those in north India. The boundaries of the Kashmiris' world seem as fluid from the state capitals as from provincial centres. Members of the families of most Pandits in the Panjab and the North-western Provinces and Avadh apparently served in the native states at some point as well. Any administrative centre, in fact, was the province of the Pandits. Distances between these centres may have been considerable, but for communities of government servants, the operative map of India did not include the area between capitals.

Geographical mobility was facilitated in the second half of the nineteenth century by the fact that the British did succeed in imposing a degree of administrative uniformity upon north and central India. As long as literacy in English was rare, the English language continued to function as a passport between what had been discrete political entities. Changing bureaucratic criteria and the creation of posts in previously non-existent spheres multiplied opportunities further.

Over time, however, the Kashmiris' reasons for coming to the states changed. They were originally attracted to the states because of their headstart in acquiring knowledge of the English language. By the end of the nineteenth century the states were attractive for precisely the opposite reason; the high standards and competitive examinations required in British India were not yet adopted in the states. Where once the Pandits had arrived as beacons of a coming age, they now appeared because that age had not yet fully dawned.

CHAPTER IX

# Post-1857 North India (U.P.)

The post-Mutiny period in north India was one of change, in spite of the conservative social policies of the British Raj. These changes were largely unintended and unforeseen. Rather than aspire to transform the whole of Indian society, the imperial government aimed merely at reconciling the élite to British control. Thus, efforts to implement social legislation were abandoned and the native princes conciliated. Characteristically, where the British thought they were restoring they were actually creating. The *taluqdari* settlement which was understood as a return to past practice was, in fact, a departure. And the gentry-magistrate system of social control designed to secure order, promoted, instead, partiality. The renunciation of radical ambition by the government produced uncertainty rather than content in the subjects, apprehension rather than appreciation.[1]

For administrative élites such as the Kashmiri Pandits, whose traditional role was one of government service, it was a particularly disquieting time. The post-1857 years saw an alteration in the relations between and within social groups.

The landed and administrative élite of north India in the later half of the nineteenth century was a heterogenous group characterized by diverse social and chronological origins. Surveying this élite in 1880, Haji Abbas Ali noted 'It is not possible to obtain a continuous history of the province of Oudh from the records of the individual taluqdars . . . The circumstances of each varies.'[2]

Interspersed among the photographs of the ancient Rajput clan leaders are portraits of Kayasths, Khatris and Bengali *taluqdars* who either purchased their estates from the previous impoverished

[1]For more on general trends, see Thomas R. Metcalf, *Aftermath of Revolt 1857-1870* (Princeton, 1964).

[2]Daroga Haji Abbas Ali, *An Illustrated Historical Album of the Rajas and Taluqdars of Oudh* (Allahabad, 1880).

proprietors or received them from the Raj.[3] Typically, they had been *qanungoes* and *chakladars* who owed their elevation to *taluqdari* status to the new openness and mobility brought about in response to changes introduced by the British.

The conflicts and changes in the external environment most threatening and most promising to the administrative communities such as the Kashmiri Pandits were those in the conditions of government service. Although here, especially, change was gradual, it was perceived as no less drastic. At issue was the traditional closed system of patronage, favour and connections, personified by the vilified but familiar figure of the *amla*. Its potential replacement was a more open system of merit and competition represented by and demanded by that new creature, the graduate.

In 1854 (just before the Mutiny), the collector of Banda district in the North-western Provinces observed in a letter to the provincial government: 'In former days, the *tehsildar* only collected cash and obeyed the orders issued to him. . . . The *tehsildar* is now the registrar of properties, summary judge, manager of the *patwari* establishment and the applier of coercive processes, while his *amla* discharges the duties formerly in the *sadr*, most of which require a degree of acquisition very superior to that of a mere copyist.'[4] Given the heightened importance of the post, the collector continued, it was essential that more qualified appointments be made. 'It is better to be related to a native deputy collector or a *serrishtadar* or one of the *sadr amla* than to have good abilities or have done good service. There is absolutely no check on hasty appointments. Large family cliques have thus introduced themselves[5] . . . Some check is therefore, required on nepotism. How can a deputy collector and *tehsildar* expose fraud and correct errors when their own families will perish in the move?'[6]

This plea for recruits more qualified than the traditional *amla* cliques was to be voiced for several decades. It was first advanced

[3]See, for example, p. 30 for the Khatri Ram Sahai, p. 45 for Durga Prasad, a Kayasth and p. 48 for the Bengali B. Mukherji, in Ali, *Historical Album*.

[4]Letter from R. N. Cust, Collector of Banda, to W. Muir, Secretary to the Government, Northwest Provinces, 20 October 1854. *Selections from the Records of Government* (S.R.G.), Northwest Provinces, Agra Orphan Press (1855), p. 414.

[5]S.R.G., p. 411.

[6]Ibid., p. 415.

by the British, and later echoed by Indians previously excluded from official service. Qualifications came to be largely synonymous with education. Predictably, it was the Department of Public Instruction that was most vociferous in the demand for recruitment of the qualified. (These demands were themselves indicative of the slow pace of change as well as expressive of the conflicting principles governing administrative employment).

In 1861, H. S. Reid, who was in charge of the Department, suggested to the provincial government that 'the willingness of the native community to receive instruction should be stimulated by the prospect of public employ.' Referring to the lack of students in Bareilly, he concluded, 'Nor can this be wondered at while the *amlas* are allowed to rely mainly on their own position for securing their sons and other relatives employment . . . the demand for government employ is greater than the supply and this would not be the case if the means of supply were subsidized.'[7]

The repeated importunings of the Department of Public Instruction came gradually to receive a more cordial reception as the conservative perspective and caution of the immediate post-Mutiny period yielded to a need for greater efficiency. The desire to conform to traditional practice conflicted with the desire to limit the diversion of revenue from those who absorbed it as they collected it. But even if sentiment turned against the *amla*, it still took a long time to eliminate him.

Throughout the 1860s the provincial government repeatedly ordered the district officers to report and alternately notified them of the presence of cliques in their establishment. But the commitment to a conservative social policy and the desire not to transfer power, however limited, to new social groups, qualified the hostility towards already established clerks and the recruitment of their relatives.

It was not until 1877 that educational requirements were first introduced as an 'absolute preliminary condition to the appointment of any candidate to an office with a salary of Rs 10 and upwards.' The qualification demanded was that the candidate pass the middle class vernacular exam unless a knowledge of English

[7]Letter dated 24 August 1861 from DPI H. S. Reid to Secretary of Government, *NWP & O General Administration Department* (GAD).

was required, in which case he was expected to pass the Anglo-Vernacular Departmental Exam.[8] The government officially relaxed even these modest requirements in the following years. The order was amended to permit the employment of the uncertified in the absence of the qualified and to allow the promotion of those previously earning less than a monthly salary of ten rupees and easier terms to those who had earned more.

To specify educational qualifications was all very well but as the Department of Public Instruction soon realized, observation was an entirely different affair. In a note to the provincial authorities, the Department observed in restrained fashion, 'this rule has been carried out with some laxity.'[9]

Gradually, however, the terms of the debate were altered. The *amla* was portrayed as a representative of a lower social class than potential recruits, and the campaign against him became more efficacious. When an American missionary was called to testify before the Education Commission in 1882, he declared the administration of Bengal was superior to that of the North-western Provinces because in the latter region 'the subordinate Judicial and Executive Services are recruited mostly from a lower class of men, the half educated and generally corrupt amla class.'

Moreover, when change was introduced, it was introduced unevenly. The Judicial Service yielded before the executive service. In arguing for better pay for *munsifs*, *The Sahas* newspaper of 15 April 1882 reflected the changing recruitment to administrative service in north India. Birth and heredity still mattered, but they mattered a bit less.

Recruitment was only one area in which bureaucratic reform was introduced. The two other significant developments were the expansion of administration and its regularization. The one was positive from the perspective of the traditional government servant as it resulted in greater employment opportunities. The other was less so, since it limited or impeded the access of the already employed to the perquisites office had traditionally bestowed.

[8] *NWP & O GAD Procdgs* February 1885, No. 1.

[9] *NWP & O GAD, E. White Off.* Director, DPI to Secretary, Govt. NWP, 9 January 1885. *GAD* February 1885.

The sort of administration the British thought they were replacing was minimal and irregular. The Judicial Establishment of Avadh was portrayed, for example, in the following terms in 1859:

> Though the only regular Judicial Courts were held in the capital, almost unlimited power was deputed to the nazims of Provinces to administer a summary kind of justice . . . To aid the nazim in his varied duties fiscal, judicial, magisterial and police deputies were appointed on moderate salaries, to which were added certain fees and perquisites; the subordinate establishments were the protégé of these deputies who shared in the harvest of the general plunder. But a large portion of the plunder was reserved for a long list of Civil functionaries recommended by the creatures of the court for service, but who never performed any duties at all, their names being entered on the nazim's roll merely as a pretext for drawing pay . . . To serve as a check on the conduct of the officials, a large body of News writers was kept on the pay of Government. According as he was paid and treated, he suppressed the truth or gave colour to facts. What the news writer was in the police, such was the Paymaster's office in the Army. Farmed out on contract by the Head Department, the office of *Bakshee* to a regiment was eagerly sought. The profits accruing from fees . . . bribes . . . arrears and mere pay brought a large revenue to the officers of the Pay Department.[10]

The whole judicial establishment formally consisted of 61 persons, but those indirectly dependent on government service was far larger than the figures would indicate. In 1890, one author in the pages of *Safir-i-Kashmir* estimated that 60 per cent of the community was supported parasitically by the livelihood of the rest.[11] Under the nawabi government the figure would have been far greater. The ramifications of transition were thus not immediately apparent from a review of the mere numbers employed. Change threatened those dependent on government *servants* as well as those dependent on government *service*. Figures which purport to demonstrate the enlargement of the administrative establishment introduced by the imperial government must be qualified by the fact that the number of those previously dependent on government service was not apparent from bald statements compiled from older payrolls, and that the change involved replacement as well as expansion. Thus the Kashmiris might well feel threatened.

The discontinuities in pre- and post-annexation government were also most concentrated in certain areas. The lucrative posts of *waqi-navis* and *bakshi* were considered the most useless by their

[10]United Kingdom, *Lords Parliamentary Papers*, *1859*, Paper 74, pp. 16-17.
[11]B. M. Dattatreya in *Safir-i-Kashmir*, December 1890.

British observers and most essential by traditional administrative classes. It was these offices that were eliminated first, and these were the offices upon which the Kashmiris, such as the Mullas, the Bakhshis, the Kauls, and the Ogras had battened previously.

Furthermore, as the Kashmiri community was not homogeneous, changes in the external environment did not have a uniform effect within it. Changes were threatening purely because they resulted in uncertainty and a certain degree of internal division as individual Pandits responded in varying ways to them. And finally, it is difficult to portray intelligently the significance of the establishment statements, because categories do not always correspond and the area encompassed is not always the same.

In the North-western Provinces[12] before 1828 there were only two ranking grades in the native judiciary, *sadr amin* and *munsif*, of which there were 157 and 86 respectively. That same year there were 356 *tehsildars* and 367 *serrishtadars*. The office of principal *sadr amin* was introduced in 1837; twelve years later there were 64 of these in the province. But the addition of this post was perhaps offset by the reduction in the number of *sadr amins*: the total of the two offices was less than the total number of *sadr amins* alone twenty years before. The largest growth was in *munsif*ships, the number of which went from 86 to 494 by 1849.

Deputy collectorships were inaugurated in 1833, and once again the introduction of a higher post was qualified by a reduction in the number of offices immediately subordinate to it. And once again the largest growth could be found at a relatively low level (where, unlike pre-British times, the perquisites could not be so easily obtained). The number of *mamlatdars* for example increased from 9 to 110.

In the twenty years from 1828 to 1849 the total establishment went from 1197 to 2813 employees, but a sizable proportion of that increase was concentrated in areas that left the traditional administrative élite untouched. The 'various' category which encompassed the most menial employees swelled from 149 to 990, an increase which almost exclusively accounts for the growth in total numbers.

[12]The following figures are all taken from United Kingdom, *Parliamentary Papers*, *Select Committee on the Indian Territories*, Vol. 10, 1852, Statement of the number of natives in Civil Administration in British India, Appendix No. 3, p. 343.

The same disproportionate increase (which did not bring much to traditional government servants) continued through the next few decades. The Kashmiris were excluded from higher ranks on racial considerations while the swelled numbers of the police, educational and menial ranks did not hold much consolation for them.[13] That in 1868, for example, 139 of the total 238 native appointments went to Hindus and 99 to Muslims should be less significant than the class distribution of appointments; the important question is whether these patterns of employment portended a shift away from the traditional bi-communal administrative class.

In the 1880s, employment opportunities at the administrative levels relevant to the Kashmiri Pandits and other service communities increased. More offices were established and made available to Indians. But the existence of increased opportunities was, once again, offset by the growth of competition for posts. Furthermore, the discretionary power of higher officials to make subordinate appointments was curtailed. And in absolute terms, the posts upon which the Kashmiris cast eyes trained by traditional expectations and hereditary presumptions remained slight (albeit more abundant than previously).

Although pay was the subject of extensive controversy and investigation, it seems to have been an issue more in Bengal than in north India. Promotion also occasioned more discontent in the lower province where 'an officer must enter at the bottom of the Rs 150 grade and rise through 122 steps before he gets Rs 300 a month.'[14]

Admission to the subordinate executive service followed nomination by the Board of Revenue in the NWP, and the Commissioners in Avadh selected largely from those who served either as *tehsildars* or head clerks, *serrishtadars*, in the Collectors' office, or who were first made honorary officers. Nominations for *tehsildars* were made either by Commissioners, the Board of Revenue or the Collectors and reviewed by a Committee. Entrance to the subordinate judicial service was secured upon recommendation of the

[13]*NWP & O GAD Prcdgs* ., August 1868, Report on the State of Education in the North-Western Provinces, pp. 509-10.

[14]Ibid., June 1883, *Prcdg*. No. 9, Feb. 4 1882, p. 29. It was only in the ranks of subordinate judges and *munsifs* of the judicial service that Indians were employed until the 1880s with a total of 84 in 1882 and 129 in 1886, of whom 122 were natives. (There were 35 subordinate judges and 94 *munsifs* at this time.)

High Court in the NWP and the Judicial Commissioner in Avadh.[15] The traditions of Avadh thus were perpetuated by a more concentrated and more personal system of nomination.

Testimony before the Public Service Commission revealed areas of consensus and disagreement among and within the traditional administrative communities regarding the official bureaucracy. Most witnesses, Kayastha, Muslim, or Kashmiri Pandit, voiced the opinion that government service should be confined, both in class and regional terms. (Where the lines of class were to be drawn, however, varied.) Most professed to religious indifference. The most significant differences lay in the question of whether, *within* the ranks of the qualified, selection was ultimately to be determined by birth alone, or some super-ascriptive criterion such as education. This was a matter which divided each community internally, it did not threaten the larger unity and agreement of the traditional administrative élite of the province. In 1886, the cross-communal links still held.

The maintenance of these links was observed by English witnesses as well as Indians.[16] Many of the English officers called as witnesses testified to the harmonious relations between Hindus and Muslims. Although they recognized that this was a social phenomenon characterizing the upper classes, they attributed this cross-communal peace to the enlightenment brought about through exposure to English education rather than to a shared tradition of government service, exposure to the norms of the Mughal court culture and a commitment, affective as well as material, to the Urdu language.

A barrister at the Allahabad High Court, Joshua Howard, noted that 'education and social intercourse are powerful factors in wearing away (resentment). Educated Muhammadans and Hindus have much more respect and sympathy for each other.'[17]

The attribution of communal tolerance to education rather than history, to present rather than past factors was one reason that the

[15]Govt. of India, *Public Service Commission*, NWP & O Sub-Commission, Replies of the Govt. of the NWP & O (Calcutta, 1888), p. 23.

[16]See for example, testimony of Clarke, *Public Service Commission*, p. 15.

[17]*Public Service Commission*, NWP Sub-Commission, p. 26; see also Clarke, p. 15, and testimony of W. C. Bennet, secretary to the provincial government.

British were slow to acknowledge the development of communal polarization when it first influenced segments of the middle and upper classes. The optimistic assumption under which the British operated was that as education became widespread, communal feeling would inevitably be diminished. Education was seen as the great solvent of the various hostilities between regional, religious and social groups, in spite of the weakened liberal enthusiasm for education subsequent to the Rising of 1857.

The British administration policy which should have strengthened the links between Muslim and Hindu administrative classes contributed, rather, to their destruction. Both Hindu and Muslim witnesses wished to perpetuate the traditional administrative coalition. It was not only privilege that was being defended, however, but tradition, and that tradition had a certain strength and utility insofar as it contributed to social integration.

The concern of witnesses appearing at the Commission hearings was directed toward other regions and new classes, rather than other religious adherents. '[Still] it is better to be ruled by a native than by a European, even if the native were a foreigner,' Kunzru was careful to answer in the most innocuous fashion. It was language rather than origin that he specified, saying candidates should be examined 'as to their knowledge of the Vernacular languages, to ascertain whether they know the language of that part of the country to which they are likely to be appointed.'[18]

T. Beck, the Principal of the MOAC and widely regarded as a spokesman for its founder, Saiyid Ahmed Khan, likewise strove to defend the interests of the traditional administrative class using a hybrid sort of language of traditional Muslim-Urdu distinctions and English terminology. But, it should be emphasized, Hindus as well as Muslims were included in his defence. 'Government should inform itself of all young men of good old families who are receiving an English education . . . good old families are to be defined as families which for many generations have held or held until recent times an honourable social position . . . those of purest descent [a Muslim consideration] and highest caste rank.'

Beck followed this observation with an involved discourse on *nasab* (descent) and *hasab* which, according to the principal meant 'social position and may be due to official position, to wealth gained by an honourable profession, to land and to good manners'

[18] *Public Service Commission*, NWP & O Evidence, p. 18.

'The chief criterion of nobility', Beck continued, 'is the length of time a family has had *hasab*.'[19] The conclusion to be drawn from this exposition was that the government ought to employ only those who had *nasab* or those who had *hasab*, for at least one generation. Indirectly, what Beck was arguing for was a return to the pre-Mutiny administrative standards.

The British were repeatedly exhorted by witnesses to observe social distinctions in making appointments.[20] Descriptions of normative guidelines invariably fitted those who employed them, but always indirectly, in language that suited the English ears for whom they were designed.

The British seemed not to have anticipated the great concern with social status displayed by their witnesses. They repeatedly asked whether *communal* and *religious* distinctions mattered and were told that *social* and *regional* distinctions were what the informant considered the more significant factors.

The Kashmiri testimony before the Commission reflected a certain self-definition and perception of interests directed primarily against the traditional nobility, who the British still attempted to transform into functioning parliamentarians. But it also was directed against potential competitors from the ranks of those previously excluded from official service by their relatively low social positions as a class, and against regional as well as social outsiders (primarily the now ubiquitous Bengalis). The Kashmiris, as was the case with most Indian witnesses, strove to emphasize points of maximum agreement; objections and discontent were directed against the distinction between covenanted and uncovenanted service, between Englishman and Indian, but underlying these were more revealing discontents.

Kunzru, one of the wealthiest and most patrician of the Pandits, disputed the wisdom of a recruitment policy in which 'no regard can be had to the social position of a man or to his morals. With a man of very inferior social position, no matter what his attainments may be, the old associations and old ideas go with him, so that when he gets power all of a sudden, at times he can hardly control himself.'[21] Kunzru repeatedly equated moral with social character, arguing that low status meant low principles.

[19]Ibid., p. 33.
[20]Ibid.
[21]Ibid., p. 18.

If he was not in favour of open admission to bureaucratic service, this did not mean, however, that the Pandit advocated a return to the old system whereby the British aimed at securing the participation of the 'traditional' landed élite in government.[22] Kunzru rejected a system of pure patronage as much as he did one of open recruitment. 'When the system was first introduced, gentlemen were appointed to the service because they were members of what were considered the Indian nobility—decayed nobility. I believe that was patronage pure and simple.'[23] When asked if he approved, the reply was no.[24]

The lawyer was asked repeatedly about the social distinctions he would have observed in making appointments. 'Are you aware that in NWP men who pass the University examinations can and do claim admission to the judicial offices and rise to high offices? Is there any distinction made as regards their fathers or unclean social position? Supposing a Bachelor of Law has for his father a shopkeeper or a man to whom you have just objected?' Ajudhia Nath resisted, however, the apparent disapproval of his questioners. To the last inquiry, he replied, 'As a matter of fact you cannot find one among the munsifs like that.'[25]

The lack of internal consensus on these questions was reflected in the conflicting testimony of Pandit Sri Kishen Kaul, a resident of Lucknow, who was, like Kunzru, a pleader, and whose lineage was considered highly respectable within the community. Sri Kishen explicitly advanced the claims of the educated. 'In the few appointments which have been made in the Province of Oudh,' said Sri Kishen, 'the candidates belonged to rich and influential families, and the educated classes who naturally look to these appointments for their future prospects have been left out in the cold.' As an advocate of the claims of the educated, Sri Kishen tended logically to favour an open competitive examination system, 'preference being given to the candidates of the province'.[26]

Aside from questions of conflicting normative standards, the Public Service Commission attempted to discover the extent to which there had been changes in actual administrative personnel. Each witness was asked: 'Do we obtain for government the same

[22]Ibid., p. 21.
[23]Ibid., p. 20.
[24]Ibid., p. 19.
[25]Ibid., p. 22.
[26]Ibid., Sri Kishen, testimony, p. 142.

classes who under native rule carried on civil administration and if not where do we look for representatives of these classes and obtain their Service?'[27] The response was not a uniform one. This reflected both the fact that this was a transitional period and the relative lack of understanding on the part of the English of the system over which they presided. 'The Lieutenant-Governor doubts the utility of the search for representatives (of those classes which formerly carried out the administration),' the Commission was informed, 'for he believes they were in no degree superior to those now serving under government and they administered a totally different system.' W. C. Bennet, then secretary to the provincial government, thought, contrarily, that those who had traditionally carried on the administration were adapting to new requirements and held on to their traditional role. 'The class who has taken to education is composed of Kayasthas and Brahmins, men who are habitually or professionally clerical . . . who acquire education and seek employment, either governmental or private . . . and who spring from the cities and towns.'[28]

The magistrate of the Aligarh Collectorate also found members of the traditional service group making the transition to British service. 'It is very hard to get men of the highest landed families,' he told the Commission, 'but very many men of families of officials are now qualifying.'[29]

The official English recognition of the Kashmiri Pandits in government employ was underestimated. The formal tally of Deputy Collectors and Extra Assistant Commissioners enumerated three Kashmiris when there were at least a dozen in the North-west Provinces, and the number of *tehsildars* was similarly underestimated at three, when the actual figure was five times that. There were said to be three Pandits in the ranks of the subordinate judges—in fact, there were at least eight, and the number of *munsifs*—according to the British record, four—at least twice this.[30]

But the Kashmiris were prominent enough to be recognized by individual British witnesses if not by official statistics. It was the

[27]Ibid., NWP & O Evidence, Question 151, p. 18.

[28]Ibid., p. 7. [29]Ibid., p. 197.

[30]This statement is made by comparing the formal tally with the history of services and civil lists for the 1880s. The conclusion is based on actual identification—the numbers may in fact be higher

opinion of T. Stoker (C. S. I.) that Kashmiri Pandits and Bengalis were most likely of all the provincial castes and creeds to take advantage of any future competitive examinations should these be offered in India as well as England. Generally Kashmiris were placed in the same category as Kayasths, rather than Bengalis, although their numbers were fewer.[31]

The other matter of interest to which the Commission alluded was the relative desirability of government and professional employ. The question was an interesting one for it juxtaposed traditional with newer means of social mobility. Government service had been one of the few established avenues of mobility.

Professional occupations such as pleaderships offered great wealth for at least some, far in excess of the pay of a *munsif*, but whether the *izzat* was equivalent was debatable. The law, in spite of the prospect of vastly enhanced salaries, was still considered in 1886 to be less satisfactory. Wealth alone was generally regarded as insufficient in determining *izzat*. It was merely the obvious alternative. This was acknowledged by one of the Commissioners, A. H. Harrington, when he remarked, 'I don't suppose any man goes to England with the single string the Civil Service or nothing and without some idea of taking up the Bar if he fails.'[32] Ramaswami Mudaliyar, the magistrate of Gorakhpur and a member of the covenanted Civil Service, maintained that 'pleaders who get high fees are [nevertheless] anxious to be *munsifs* at one half the pay because they consider that government service gives *izzat*; pensions would be an object but *izzat* is the leading thing.'[33] These are views the Pandits would subscribe to as well, although pensions seem to have been an important consideration. 'Pensioner' was, at this time, one of the most important titles a Pandit could include in his name. The community magazines never omitted this information, which followed immediately upon the *takhallus*. To the Pandits it represented a security that was becoming increasingly elusive.

The lines of fracture within north Indian society were neither inevitable nor even evident at this time.

Shifts in the standards of bureaucratic employ could portend conflict within as much as between communities. It is necessary to

[31] *Public Service Commission*, NWP & O Evidence, p. 82.
[32] Ibid., p. 183. [33] Ibid., p. 58.

discover whether changes evoked responses from differing segments within a social group or whether they simply involved differing adaptations from one generation to the next.

Kashmiri identity by no means dictated economic identity, nor did it necessarily result in shared material interests. *Perception* of objective circumstances as well as reality determined whether the interests of a Kashmiri graduate would gravitate towards those of a Bengali graduate or a Kashmiri *taluqdar*.

British records of the time voiced a growing optimism that corresponded neither to Indian opinion nor to future developments. The British saw Indian society undergoing a process of realignment which they thought would produce greater rather than less social integration. The Annual Administration Report for 1887 expressed English faith that social tension was a passing phenomenon.

'There is no friction except during riots which occur among the lower classes on festivals,' said Joshua Clarke.[34] E. White, the head of the Department of Public Instruction concurred. 'Education has tended to promote tolerance,' he declared. 'Those who engage in riots are invariably of the lowest class.'[35]

This was the view, as well, of several Indian witnesses. Jawala Prasad adopted it to dispute the English contention that delegation of power to natives was inhibited by the fact that only Europeans could control religious disturbances. When asked how the upper classes of the two religious communities behave when riots occur, the Assistant Magistrate of Gorakhpur replied, '[By] taking leading Hindus and Muslims into confidence, matters are satisfactorily arranged... In Aligarh, we left the whole matter to leading Hindus and Mohammadans and everything went off without hitch.'[36]

Changes in governmental bureaucracy were not the only political changes facing the Pandits. There were others as well, which could be threatening in that they created sources of power which were alternative to the administration, the one source of power to which the Kashmiris had some access.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, electoral politics

[34]Ibid., p. 15. [35]Ibid., p. 138. [36]Ibid., p. 158.

were introduced and became particularly significant as a factor in the urban distribution of power. Ripon's resolution on local self government of 1882 was followed the next year by the NWP Municipal Act and Municipal Boards with non-official majorities in the major cities of the province in 1884. After 1885, the formation of the Indian National Congress created another locus of political influence with which the Kashmiris had to come to terms.

As the older social links of deference and patronage were eroded, they were replaced by these highly political institutions and new religious associations. Both tended to aggravate the lack of social integration, to bring into prominence individuals who were not participants in the Mughal court culture and who did not ascribe to its synthetic, cosmopolitan norms.

The 1880s saw the Hindu revivalist movement institutionalized in local Hindu Samajes and literary organizations dedicated to the furtherance of the Hindusthani language in its most Sanskritized form and script. Shortly afterwards cow protection societies were introduced from the Punjab. That the Hindu religious movement became bifurcated into Dharm Sanatanists and Arya Samajis did not diminish the destructive effect it had upon cross-communal links within the administrative élite, fracturing what had been almost a class united by occupation, language, and residence into two religious communities whose previously shared tradition was repudiated.

As the province became more integrated with the metropolitan economy, development became more specialized and more imbalanced. Trade and manufacturing became increasingly concentrated in a few of the larger urban centres. The agricultural sector was characterized by the production of cash crops which tended to bring prosperity to a minority, rather than the production of foodgrains which at least ensured subsistence for the majority.[37]

The primary instrument of the centralization of trade and the commercialization of agriculture was the railway. By 1887, the province could boast of more miles of track than any other province in India. It was estimated that no village in the North-western Provinces except in the hill tracts lay more than forty miles from the railway.[38] These economic transformations were uneven in

[37]NWP & O *Census Report*, 1891, p. 163.
[38]*Annual Administration Report*, NWP & O, 1886-7, p. 9.

geographical penetration and mixed in social effect. The west of the province experienced greater growth both in manufacturing and trade and agriculture. The soil in the western part of the province was said to be richer. The towns situated in the west became the great entrepots for north Indian markets as well as centres for manufacture and the processing of cotton, sugar, jute, flour, and the treatment of hides and skins.[39] Urban centres to the east, in Avadh, by contrast, experienced a decline in the second half of the nineteenth century. This was a result of the loss of the Court patronage of numerous small artisans who produced the luxury goods consumed by past rulers, or of being bypassed by the railway, a situation affecting riverine towns (such as Farrukhabad) in particular.[40]

The consequence of economic change was to leave the landed élite of the eastern part of the province unchallenged by any new socio-economic force. It endured because there was less for it to withstand at this time. To the west, however, deeper economic transformations were buoying up the hitherto suppressed commercial classes, which tended largely to be Hindu. As an urban social group, the Kashmiris were favourably situated to profit from the new institutions established in cities. They had easy access to the educational establishments that were the key to official and professional employment. But as an administrative community whose fortunes had been necessarily linked to the Muslim ruling classes, the Kashmiris were concentrated in the cities associated with that rule, and therefore, were in the areas bypassed by commercial development. Thus, the tendency to depend on clerical pursuits was reinforced by location. Urban residence supported the Kashmiri proclivity for literate occupations but because they resided in those areas experiencing less growth, few other alternatives were available to them. The resurgence of the commercial middle class, however, made the Kashmiris acutely aware of their lack of wealth. They felt themselves increasingly dependent on an increasingly less certain career in government service and as wealth became a more useful resource and a highly visible one, the wisdom of previous choices began to be questioned.

As the Kashmiris surveyed their environment, then, there were

[39]NWP & O *Census Report*, 1911.

[40]For further discussion see C. B. Bayly, 'Town Building in North India, 1790-1830', *Modern Asian Studies* 9, 4 (1975). pp. 483-504.

very few areas of comfort. Where there were new opportunities, such as in the economic sphere, the Kashmiris felt distanced, where their traditional strengths lay, they felt threatened.

CHAPTER X

# The Kashmiri Pandits' Situation and Dilemmas

The post-1857 years in north India saw the consolidation of those Pandits already in British favour and gave rise to a new group challenging the already pre-eminent. In spite of the continued success of the Kashmiris it was a time of heightened fears as well as great achievement within the community.

The Pandits found themselves ill-adapted to the conditions prevailing in their social environment, but to the extent that adaptation required reform, it created disunity and hence gave rise to additional dilemmas. The norms that had contributed to the Kashmiris' success in the previous administrative culture were no longer functional. Fluency in Persian and the adoption of an Islamicized way of life were not external trappings that could be easily discarded, however. These had become fundamental to the very self-definition of the Pandits. When they ceased to be instrumental in ensuring livelihood, the choice arose as to what sort of cultural models to substitute. Linked with the problem of identity was that of isolation; if the Pandits were no longer part of an Urdu-speaking government service group steeped in the synthetic but somewhat Islamicized values of Mughal India the question was not only who they were, but with whom were they to identify, and how were they to make that choice as continuous with their past as possible?

There were several alternatives, of which greater anglicization and westernization was one. This presented several obvious advantages; the British Raj had replaced the Mughal imperial rule as the source of administrative employ and ultimate political authority. It was in keeping with the community tradition to adapt to the requirements of that authority. On the other hand, the Kashmiris were Brahmans and could choose to emphasize their religious identity. Religion had been part of the Pandits' private environment under the Mughals, and while it was not visible, it was not

forgotten. There were still Pandits who knew Sanskrit as well as Persian, there were still Pandits who went from serving as *wazirs* to becoming *sadhus*. The advantages of turning to Hinduism and reaffirming their religious identity grew through the end of the nineteenth century. This stress on choice appears somewhat mechanistic, but this is how it appeared in the pages of the community magazines as the Kashmiris debated their situation and their future.

The final alternative open to the Kashmiris appeared even more deliberate and contrived. This was to turn towards Kashmir, to reaffirm links, forgotten over time and distance, with their origins. The communications network created by the British had to some extent overcome physical distance, facilitating travel to Kashmir and the exchange of letters and news. Yet, the suggestion that the Pandits learn the Kashmiri language and reacquaint themselves with Kashmiri customs indicated the depth of their malaise as they contemplated their problems, rather than represent a practical solution to these problems.

A general sense of apprehension was not confined to the Kashmiris; one of the most striking aspects of the social history of this time was the defensiveness expressed by almost every group. Yet the conditions created by British rule tended to aggravate existing insecurity among Kashmiris to a degree unparalleled within other groups. The community magazines voiced a persistent sense of isolation, weakness, and lack of identity, the foundations of which lay as much in the historical situation as present uncertainty.

The Pandits had always regarded themselves as a minority immigrant community. Whether their exile was forced or voluntary, they never were and never felt themselves to be fully assimilated in their new domicile. Even after several generations in the plains, they thought of themselves as, and were identified as, Kashmiris. When Ajudhia Nath Kunzru appeared before the Public Service Commission, for example, he was asked 'of which country' he was a native. He replied that he was born in Agra. 'Are you not a Kashmiri Brahmin?' pursued the questioner.[1] This interchange was repeated innumerable times. The Pandit was reluctant to identify himself publicly as a Kashmiri, and was always forced, in the end, to identify himself as one.

The census treated the Pandits in inconsistent fashion. The 1865 North-Western Provincial census included the category 'Kash-

[1] *Public Service Commission*, NWP&O Evidence, p. 21

miris' which referred explicitly to the Pandits, who, it explained, 'emigrated to Cashmere, took the name of Pandits, formed themselves into a separate caste,' and numbered 791.[2] The 1891 census included Kashmiris in the table showing population of the province born outside its borders and in a section for Kashmiri language speakers. There were far more individuals identified as Kashmiri-born (1,403)[3] than Kashmiri language speakers (273)[4] which suggests that more than those actually born in Kashmir identified themselves as Kashmiri. In 1911, the Census identified only eighty-eight speakers of Kashmiri in the United Provinces,[5] enumerated 1,906 individuals who were said to have Kashmir as their birthplace;[6] and in the breakdown of the provincial Brahmans found 1,336 Kashmiri Pandits.[7] The small size of the community necessarily deprived the Kashmiris of the strength of numbers.

Changing circumstances intensified existing dilemmas. Competition intensified the difficulty of securing access to traditional sources of livelihood; if heredity no longer worked as the basis for a claim to a share in appointments, the Kashmiris did not have recourse to the newer arguments of either numbers or previous exclusion. As access to English language education was no longer confined to the traditionally literate, the ranks of the qualified swelled. Within the Kashmiri community, moreover, performance was not felt to be keeping pace.

The twin imperatives, then, were communal unity and social reform, the one to give the strength and the other the means to adapt to changing external conditions. Much of the internal history of the Kashmiri Brahmans in the later half of the nineteenth century revolved around the unhappy realization that these aims were to prove contradictory. Change would itself be inherently divisive.

The mirrors reflecting the aspirations and apprehensions of the Kashmiris were the community magazines. The first, the *Murasla-Kashmir*, appeared from Lucknow in 1872, under the editorship of

[2]NWP & O *Census*, 1865, p. 51.
[3]NWP & O *Census* 1891, Table X, p. 5, Vol. XVII.
[4]Ibid., Table XI, p. 21.
[5]*U.P. Census* 1911, Table X, p. 160.
[6]Ibid., Table XI, p. 193.
[7]Ibid., Table XIII, p. 247.

one Shiv Narain Bahar.[8] Shiv Narain was a leading figure in the literary associations and reform groups of Lucknow, as well as the pioneer of reform within the Kashmiri community. Shiv Narain presided over the *Jalsa-i-Tazib*, a literary organization which was the creation of the cross-communal Urdu-speaking élite of Lucknow, formed in 1865.[9] The *Jalsa* had a reading room which received all the leading vernacular newspapers of north India, and a library. The 120 members gathered at least once a month to listen to papers and discuss female education, administrative reform and other current issues. Many of the papers found their way into print in the *Akbar Sirishta i Talim Oudh*, a publication edited by Shiv Narain which included four parts: 'useful articles', entertaining stories, provincial news, and world events.[10] According to the British authorities, 'two vernacular newspapers have sprung up into existence from among the members of the *Jalsa-i-Tahzib*; the Kashmiri organ for promoting social reform among that class and *Mirat-ul-Hind*.' The Kashmiri organ, of course, referred to the *Murasla*.[11] These magazines were founded by individuals, they were not joint or group endeavours and were an expression of a felt lack of well-being both concerning future prospects and internal affairs.

The changing conditions introduced into the Pandits' world in the late nineteenth century served to heighten the insecurity of an already defensive minority. Past solutions to the problems of vulnerability and survival were no longer adequate. Nor, it seemed, was the leadership of the community willing and able to adequately respond. The existence of these new communal organs testified to the changing internal structure of the community and the insufficiency of the traditional leadership of the Pandits.

The contributors to the *Murasla* and then the *Safir-i-Kashmir* were not many. Only a dozen, perhaps, wrote tirelessly. Perhaps three times as many Kashmiris posted letters registering their views. Meetings drew from half a dozen to fifty participants. The

[8]Although Shiv Narain was a pivotal figure in the community's history, there is curiously little information about him. His influence is attested by numerous poems lamenting his death which are reproduced in *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, but these provide little illumination of the facts of his life.

[9]*Report of the Department of Public Instruction*, 1874-75, p. 72.

[10]Ibid., p. 59.

[11]*Report of the Department of Public Instruction*-Oudh, 1869-70.

pages containing the community news, however, listed the particulars of at least one hundred individuals, and the editors estimated a readership of over 400. Although these organs were not the vehicle of mass opinion, they do seem representative of community concerns. There was a certain uniformity in the definition and analysis of problems, if not in the solution advocated. The situation of the Pandits as represented in the pages of the *Murasla* and then the *Safir* was one of decline, identified specifically as a post-Mutiny phenomenon.

The Kashmiris referred to themselves as '*ahl-i-qalam*', people of the pen. Their success had lain originally in their mastery of Persian and later in their exploitation of connections. While all the evidence in official sources cited previously suggested that the old system prevailed; that patronage rather than qualifications was the decisive criterion governing administrative employ, Kashmiris were taking up their pens and writing in the pages of the *Safir* that connections were no longer enough, that qualifications were crucial and the Kashmiris were lacking in the acquisition of these new skills. This analysis, stated a good deal less coolly, is encountered in the first issues of both *Murasla* and the *Safir*, and repeated in subsequent issues of both journals by authors of varying regional origins and outlooks.

At first, articles were informative in tone. They communicated to the reader that the Angrezi Raj was not a bad one, and was, in any case, a relatively permanent one. Adjustment was both necessary and painless. Later, this sort of article was replaced by ones more exhortatory in tone, and these in turn yielded to a note of desperation twenty years later.

'We think because at first a little English language got us jobs, it is still sufficient,' Bishen Narain Dar warned the community in 1891: 'Other communities no longer are prejudiced and ignorant, the comparative advantage of the Pandit no longer exists.' There was a time, declared Dar, when 'even the stones in Kashmiri Muhalla could boast they had an uncle who is a Deputy Collector.'[12] But that time, according to the author, was past.

Bishen Narain thought the solution lay only in education, that as the community became exposed to western ideals, those elements in the tradition which were exercising a regressive effect on the

[12]Dar, *Safir-i-Kashmir*, July 1891.

fortunes of the Pandits would naturally be discarded. However, he was well aware that as long as the community was allocating most of its wealth to nonproductive rituals, it was unable to afford to undertake the education of the younger generation. This dilemma would frustrate the progressive Kashmiris throughout the later nineteenth century.

'Now jobs gained through community prestige, influence and connections are only allotted through competitive performance based on knowledge of English', remarked Shiv Narain Raina 'Shamim'. He found only a few Pandits even qualified to take the exams. But he asked, 'where what is required is flattery, who can beat the Pandit?'[13]

These analyses reached beyong material conditions to the very essence of what the community was and what it ought to be; and revealed a profound lack of ease. It was not only that flattery was no longer efficacious, it was that it was debasing. The Pandits began to regard themselves, in the pages of the community journals, with new standards, and found themselves not only backward but unattractive as well. As the Kashmiris began the painful process of self examination, they produced a series of articles detailing their characteristics, among which flattery figured rather prominently. But more often, self contemplation seemed to reveal a lack of *any* identifiable qualities. In another article contributed by Shamim entitled 'What is Community', the matter was investigated at some length.

Shamim's examination of the 'strange condition' of the community presented a community that never forgot its minority status, a community whose survival depended on compromise and adaptation.

'The Kashmiri Pandit follows all traditions for maximum protection, Kashmiri, provincial, and local,' wrote Shamim. 'The result is [that] nothing is his own.'[14]

The habit of imitation was the subject of several articles in *Safir-i-Kashmir*. Iqbal Kishen, an assistant accountant in Sialkot, labelled his article on the phenomenon, 'Bher-chel', referring to the sheepishness of a community that instinctively follows each passing influence.[15] Commenting on the lack of identity of the Pandits,

[13]Shiv Narain Raina 'Shamim', *Safir-i-Kashmir* (March 1892).
[14]Ibid.
[15]Iqbal Kishen, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (March 1891).

Avtar Kishen Agha wrote, 'We do not have a nationality. We have lost our language, and our customs. We have only the Kashmiri name.'[16]

Shamim's analysis of the community led him, as it did Bishen Narain Dar, to anticipate difficulties in bringing about change. If the Kashmiris imitated whichever community happened to dominate their particular locality, there was no one nucleus of the Kashmiris. Shamim anticipated quite correctly that this meant both a lack of unity and paralysis, for each individual enclave was too weak to bring about the changes required for all.

The Kashmiris adopted an historical perspective, seeing their lack of unity as something that had evolved over time. In an article appearing in the fall 1891 edition of *Safir-i-Kashmir*, Brij Mohan Dattatreya explained the lost unity as a result of migration. Because Kashmir represented lost unity, it was idealized. 'Leaving Kashmir was like leaving Eden,' wrote Dattatreya, 'it was our downfall. We made fortunes and became self-centered.'[17] The Lucknowi Pandits, according to Dattatreya, worshipped *tazias* like the Shias of Lucknow at Muharram; the Delhiwallas were superstitious. Another analysis of the problem was sent in from Rohtak by an anonymous contributor and appeared in the February 1891 issue of the *Safir-i-Kashmir*. Unlike Dattatreya, the author found that when they first arrived in the plains, because they felt uneasy, the Pandits were very unified and helped each other. Later, the English introduced change, and multiplied the divisions within the community.[18]

The concern with lack of unity was a *practical* one; the community could only undertake reforms if there were a certain consensus regarding the direction and extent of reform. But, once again, the concern seems to have been a *fundamental* one as well; reflecting a sense of increased vulnerability and weakness. 'We are outsiders to all [in north India],' Pran Nath Kaul 'Bahar' wrote to *Murasla-i-Kashmir* from Meerut. 'We must help each other.'[19]

But if the impetus to unify was defensive, the effort to unify was divisive, nurturing further insecurity, for the appeal for greater

[16]Avtar Kishen Agha, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Oct.-Nov. 1891).
[17]B. M. Dattatreya, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Oct.-Nov. 1891).
[18]*Safir-i-Kashmir* (February 1891), anon.
[19]Pran Nath Kaul 'Bahar', *Murasla-i-Kashmir* (August 1873), see also Avtar Kishen Agha, *Safir-i-Kashmir*. (Jan. 1891), amongst others.

unity was in effect a statement of dissatisfaction with the leadership, and a challenge to it. In attempting to bring the community together, the internal structure of the community was being altered.

Although there had been no formal organization previously, the community was, in fact, closely bound. One cohesive force was that of the *gurus*. The *gurus* were not the principal guarantors of communal unity, primarily because the gurus were in competition with each other for clients among the secular Pandits, upon whom they remained dependent. They did not, therefore, exercise any controlling influence upon their locality, although they were an important source of information for new arrivals, and at ritual occasions. It was the guru who would ensure, for example, that all the local Pandits were invited to a wedding or sacred thread ceremony.

But the main architect of local communal unity was the *buzurg* or elder, and this figure was not a practising guru, but rather an individual whose position rested both on internal considerations and in status within the larger social environment. There was not necessarily any correspondence between a figure whom the British considered 'rais' and one whom the community thought a '*buzurg*', but generally it was so. Position in the community involved several factors. The Pandit had at least to hold a respectable post. Length of residence in the plains was a contributing element; so was ancestral achievement. Attainments in the cultural domain were as important as those in the political; mastery of Persian belles-lettres was as much a source of mobility and status within the community as in the court. Religious piety was respected but not demanded, knowledge of Sanskrit or a vegetarian diet were admired but not required—secular considerations were far more significant. As an administrative community, the Kashmiris displayed a sensitive receptivity to secular criteria; elevation in the political realm was almost immediately the source of communal status.

The physical structure of the *buzurg* residence reflected his leadership. It incorporated a large assembly hall which was often separate from the rest of the house. It was here that male members of the community congregated for religious festivals such as *shiv raat*, and cultural functions, particularly *mushairas*. (In Delhi,

where the confines of the Bazar Sita Ram enforced a more spartan use of space, a courtyard rather than a hall became the venue for communal gatherings.) Later the community associations met at the home of the local elder, in a concrete manifestation of continued dependence upon him.

The *buzurg* establishment could also be identified by the number of Kashmiri Brahman cooks employed. Religious orthodoxy did not proscribe meat eating, but it did prohibit the consumption of onions, garlic and chicken. It was not necessarily lax, although the Kashmiri dietary rules did differ from those in the plains. It was social considerations rather than the requirements of religious orthodoxy that mandated the employment of a Kashmiri cook. Although few of the Pandit households could actually afford one, this was a social goal to which all aspired.

The households of the leaders of the largest Kashmiri centres such as Lahore and Lucknow had up to a dozen cooks. These would preside over the preparation of produce brought in from the *buzurg's* landholdings in the country; the *buzurg* household was in effect the communal kitchen.

An important part of the elder's function was to be accessible, to be in a position to extend hospitality and favours. When a Kashmiri arrived at a new place it was customary to pay a call upon the local *buzurg* and it was to him that an appeal for advice, employment or funds was traditionally directed. And on festivals such as *nauroz* when the community came together under the auspices of the *buzurg*, members came away with a heightened sense of solidarity.

In other ways, however, the utility of communal solidarity was on the wane; jobs were alloted more on an individual basis; achievement or qualifications rather than connections, at least nominally, governed recruitment. Furthermore the community was no longer content to measure its achievements by those of its leaders. Individual aspirations were aroused. The sentiment grew that 'we need to raise all the community,'[20] that the outstanding leaders did not have sufficient effect on the fortunes of the rest of the community.

What was significant about internal communal change, the changing terms and imperatives of communal relations, was neither the rise nor the demise of communal associations per se, but

[20]Shamim, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (March 1892).

the manner in which what had been a patronage structure was transformed into a less stratified system of relations, and what had begun as an appeal to the leadership ended as a challenge to it. This development was neither anticipated nor welcomed.

Initial attempts to organize the Kashmiris in an explicit, formal fashion were invariably accompanied by expressions of deference to the traditional elders and efforts to involve the *buzurgs* as much as possible. But the very fact of the new associations was inevitably a statement of dissatisfaction with the leadership. Mass concern over fund raising implied that *buzurg* patronage was either inadequate or misdirected. Controversy and lack of rank consensus suggested a lack of control by the leadership or disagreement with its point of view.

Concerned Pandits surveyed their community and saw increasing divergence within the ranks, a sort of paralysis at the head, and a general loss of sentiment which moved editors to print such aphorisms as 'He is not a man who does not participate in the problems and sorrows of the community.' 'Greatness comes from serving the community,' editors remarked in the first issue of *Safir-i-Kashmir*, 1890.[21] The third issue of the *Murasla-i-Kashmir* addressed itself to the problem in an anonymous article from Lucknow written in December 1872. The author referred to two groups within the Kashmiri ranks, the Delhi *farqa* and the Kashmiri *farqa*, whose increasing separation he lamented. They differed, the writer maintained, not in the matter of dress because in Delhi there was no one kind of dress, nor in choice of residence, but in the practice of traditional ways. The Delhi group included those Pandits who were giving up their traditions and adopting those of other cultures, an oblique reference to a more westernized style of life.[22] The concern of the author was not with the change so much as with the division which followed the adoption of change by only a portion of the community.

In an editorial appended to the conclusion of this same piece, Shiv Narain 'Bahar' voiced agreement with the anonymous author that the two groups must become reconciled. Bahar too did not indicate which group he supported; it was not reform but its divisive effect that mattered.[23]

[21] Avtar Kishen Agha, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Oct. 1890). p. 415.
[22] *Murasla-i-Kashmir* (Dec. 1872), anon.
[23] Ibid.

This ambiguity, the need to reform and yet contain the divisive implications of reform, was apparent from the outset, and as divergences increased so did the communal insecurity and fear. Change was as much debated for its effect upon harmonious communal relations as upon its merit.

Reforms designed to facilitate the survival of the community affected the balance of power within the community. Measures aimed at furthering access to resources involved questions of comparative advantages within the community as well as between it and other social groups. The *material* implications of measures altering customary practice accounted at least partially for the degree of ensuing controversy.

'We don't believe in democracy and we lack leaders,' wrote Narendra Nath Raina Razdan from Lahore in January of 1893, in a summary of the state of the community.[24] The pages of the *Safir* and *Murasla* reflected a habit of deference and dependence upon the community leadership. They showed a reluctance to create conflicts marking the community's relations with the external world as well as internal relations; further testimony to the felt vulnerability of a minority group.

A letter printed in the early issue of the *Murasla* recommended that news of the community be collected by the local *rais*, that the editor contact *rais* in each locality and request that these figures send in details of the situation of the various members.[25] This innocuous suggestion not only reflected the fact that the *rais* was the principal source of information, it was, as well, an attempt to involve the leadership in the new communal enterprises. Such conciliatory endeavours were motivated by the recognition that without leadership support, the editors' goals could hardly be implemented. Only the participation of the *buzurg* could secure for an ambitious or concerned editor the necessary respectability.

Letters sent both to *Safir-i-Kashmir* and the *Murasla* repeatedly stressed the necessity to involve important members of the community in the publication. Frequently, the letter writers included the names of suitable candidates. Most of these nominees were high in British service or the most successful professionals, boasted respectable lineage, and were fairly well off.

The inauguration of a publication always elicited a plea that the

[24]Narendra Nath Raina Razdan, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Jan. 1893).
[25]*Murasla-i-Kashmir*, No. 3 (Dec. 1872), anon.

editor avoid controversy and secure the support of the leaders. The second issue of the *Safir* contained letters supplementing the customary injunctions with the observation that the *Murasla's* failure to observe these elementary precautions led to its impotence and eventual demise.

Because the *Murasla* was controversial, wrote Bishen Narain Mulla, the Superintendent of the Chungi or Tolls at Allahabad, people avoided it.[26] Sahr, writing from Ambala, concluded similarly, that the *Murasla* was made useless by its espousal of a controversial cause, and the alienation of the elders.[27] Eighteen months later, Inder Prasad Kitchloo wrote from Muzaffernagar to note that the elders were still not paying sufficient attention to the *Safir*, because, having seen the fate of the *Murasla*, none dared become involved in the new periodical. The situation, according to Kitchloo had in fact become worse, because those previously involved in the *Murasla* were now too intimidated to participate in the *Safir*.[28]

Throughout the life of *Safir*, its editor, Avtar Kishen Agha, repeatedly called for the opinions of named leaders, asking that they send in letters or articles, but only rarely did they choose to respond. Response in general remained limited. Observers enumerated only ten really active contributors. (These were not, however, exponents of one point of view, issues were genuinely debated in the *Safir*.)

When Jawarharlal Hakoo, a retired *tehsildar*, joined the ranks of the activists in Lahore, that fact was triumphantly announced in the March 1891 pages of *Safir*. 'If such a great man supports us,' exulted Maharaj Kishen Ghumkhuar, 'it shows that it is safe to support us.'[29] Change, or simple action, could only be taken, evidently, with a generous provision of reassurances, and these could come only from community leaders.

If those merely inaugurating new forms of communal *activity* could only hope to succeed with the support of the leaders, the *buzurg's* advocacy of *reform* was even more essential. Reform, it was argued, had to be exemplary. In the fifth issue of *Murasla*, Ratan Nath Lucknowi wrote that if the rich reduced expenses, the

[26]B. N. Mulla, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Dec. 1890).
[27]*Safir-i-Kashmir* (Nov. 1890).
[28]I. P. Kitchloo, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (June 1891).
[29]M. K. Ghumkhuar, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (March 1891).

rest of the community would follow their model.[30] Eight months later, Kanhaya Lal Razdan communicated his agreement that the initiative must lie with the leaders.[31]

Gradually, however, advocates of an alternative path became more numerous. They recommended that local committees take the initiative in bringing about change.

The source of legitimacy within the Kashmiri community was shifting slowly, away from the leadership to those claiming to represent the majority of the membership. The implications of democratic decision-making were being worked out within social groups as well as within larger political forums. The community was still decentralized, but local committees rather than local leaders passed on issues of collective interest and took on the functions previously alloted to the elders, such as fund-raising on behalf of the poorer members of the community.

[30]Ratan Nath Lucknowi, *Murasla-i-Kashmir* (Feb. 1873).
[31]K. L. Razdan, *Murasla-i-Kashmir* (Nov. 1873).

CHAPTER XI

# Reform Among the Kashmiri Pandits

Reform among the Pandits raised several questions. The first was to determine who would decide the bounds of reform. The lack of unity among the *gurus*, their decentralized situation and their dependence upon their patrons eliminated them from a role in communal reform. It was therefore necessary either for the traditional leadership or an alternative leadership to take the initiative.

Those who were the first to respond to the new imperatives were a mixed group, differing in motivation, and commitment. There were those who readily agreed to eliminate what they understood to be the innovations, others who were dedicated to a wholesale elimination of the customs themselves. The superficial reforms were the first and most easily implemented. As the issues became more substantial, support fell off, and the pace of change slowed.

Reform was problematical. It occasioned controversy not only because it threw into question the assumptions by which people lived but because it affected their access to resources. In debates about education abroad, about the construction of a boarding house for Kashmiri students, about ritual expenses and dowries and so on, what was being argued about was wealth as much as welfare, resources as much as rules.

Attitude to reform differed regionally more than it did socially. Change was not introduced into the various geographical regions of the Kashmiri universe at an equal pace, or to an equivalent degree. Opposition to reform was far more prevalent in Hindusthan than in the Panjab; the process of communal change far more divisive in north India than elsewhere.

Kashmiri contemplation of reform was marked by hesitancy and circularity. Education, it was acknowledged, was a necessary prelude to reform; yet the Pandits could hardly afford to undertake

education as long as they were burdened by the expenses of customary ritual.[1] Material interest mandated reform—material interest also hampered it.

The extent to which religion was *not* at issue in the debate was evident from letters published in the pages of the community journals, in which writers communicated lack of familiarity both with the prescriptions of orthodox religion and the underlying rationale behind them. Behari Lal Dar wrote to the *Murasla* in July 1873 to call for an inquiry into religious practices because few members of the community were able to understand them. 'In changing times,' the Pandit noted, 'many people question these practices and it is better to answer questions after research has been done.'[2] The general ignorance of the Kashmiri Pandits in matters of religion was alluded to repeatedly in *Safir-i-Kashmir*, and condemned by the editor because it created an unfortunate dependence on gurus who were almost equally ignorant.[3]

Thus several articles published in the community organs had as their purpose the communication of information concerning 'Hindu' religion and custom. The November 1873 issue of *Murasla* invited readers to send in contributions on what the Hindu religious texts had to say about the institution of marriage, while a letter in the same issue suggested contacting 'some of the respectable families of Kashmir' for illumination of community habits.[4] Information and analysis, it was hoped, would allow the issue to be presented in less controversial terms; as restoration of the proper rather than perpetuation of the false.

The issues pondered by the Kashmiris were similar to those raised by comparable social groups such as the Kayasthas. At the first Kayastha Conference, convened in Lucknow in 1887, the Kayasthas 'chalked out an ambitious programme—to raise the Kayastha Pathshala to a college; to promote commercial and professional careers and thus relieve the Kayasthas from their dependence on literary and clerical pursuits; to stop the practice of early marriage, stipulated dowry and marriage extravagance; to establish a National Fund to assist students to obtain education

[1]Bishen Narain Dar, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (May 1891).
[2]B. L. Dar, *Murasla-i-Kashmir* (July 1873).
[3]A. K. Agha, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Feb. 1891 and Dec. 1891).
[4]*Murasla-i-Kashmir* (Nov. 1873), anon.

abroad.[5] Like the Pandits, the Kayasthas and other 'middle class' Indians saw a direct relationship between reduction of marriage expenditure and the resources wherewith to finance the education of their sons.[6] In caste associations, emphasis on the reduction of ceremonial expense was paralleled by a stress on increased education.

Those who wished to see change implemented were impeded by the difficulty of working piecemeal change. Once even a minor point was challenged, the whole customary construct was weakened. It was all very well to reduce the expenses associated with a marriage but how was education possible when a young boy became a husband rather than a student? And if he was exposed to an education determined less by traditional than by modern British norms, how was he to establish any commonality with a wife who remained excluded from his novel knowledge? Would not children be caught in a struggle in which the influence of an ignorant mother would prove predominant? Logically, then, the simple demand that Kashmiris conform to the new imperatives brought by the British Raj involved at least the reduction of dowries and other ritual expenses, the end of child marriage, and female education. And if a reformer was to be thoroughly ambitious, or wished the community to have a competitive edge in the administrative battlefield, education abroad would have to be advocated as well.

The issues to which the community journals devoted most space shifted over their respective lifetimes. The *Murasla* took on child marriage and expenses. It was also concerned with questions of general status to which it proposed impractical and vague sorts of solutions. Some of the most limited reforms such as the elimination of fireworks were implemented simply because they were not seen as consequential. The proposals appearing in the *Safir* were both more varied and more far-reaching than those in the *Murasla*,

[5]Lucy Carroll, 'Ideological Factions in a Caste Association—The Kayastha Conference: Educationalists and Social Reformers', *South Asia*, p. 13. Carroll's statement that 'the most important [thread of continuity] in the period between 1890 and 1912 was the continuing ideological debate between the Educationalists and the Social Reformers' (p. 25). does not apply to the Pandits for whom the issues were congruent rather than contradictory.

[6]Lucy Carroll, 'Caste, Social Change, and the Social Scientist: A Note on the Ahistorical Approach to Indian Social History', *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. XXXV (1975), p. 77.

and were countered by more vehement rebuttals. These emanated both from conservatives opposing the changes themselves, and from those who opposed them through apprehension over their effect on community unity which they thought overriding.

The Boarding House controversy was indicative of the practical material considerations that dominated any given issue.

The need for a boarding house for Kashmiri students did not arise during the lifetime of the *Murasla*. The suggestion was advanced initially in the first issue of the *Safir* in 1890. The Kashmiris, the author observed, have not provided for the progress of their community, and because they have not yet founded a university (this is undoubtedly a veiled reference to the establishment of the Kayastha Pathsala in Allahabad), Kashmiri students must leave home to get an education. A boarding house, it was felt, would make their departure more palatable to their families.[7]

The idea was referred to approvingly in a letter that appeared in the next issue of *Safir*, penned by Inder Prasad Kitchloo, a *vakil* in Muzaffernagar. Kitchloo also portrayed establishing a boarding house as less desirable than the foundation of a college. In addition, he called for an educational congress and for *vilayati* education. He tempered this somewhat extreme recommendation, however, by suggesting that the community make arrangements for its students to learn Sanskrit.[8]

The strategy of linking new institutions with older ideals was one frequently employed. But the disputations over the boarding house were not really founded on religious grounds. Religious objections merely disguised more material fears, a fact to which Sarup Narain Razdan alluded when he wrote that a boarding house was not necessary because the Kashmiris did not *really* eat food prepared only by Kashmiri Brahman cooks.[9]

Opposition notwithstanding, energetic members of the community launched a National Education Fund. This, it was hoped, would raise money for scholarships and the proposed boarding house. The creation of the fund was announced in the January 1891 issue of *Safir-i-Kashmir* in an article by Monohar Nath Sapru,

[7]A. K. Agha, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Nov. 1890).
[8]I. P. Kitchloo, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Jan. 1891).
[9]S. N. Razdan, *Safir-i-Kashmir*.

a *vakil* of Faizabad, who, like Kitchloo, supported instruction in Sanskrit.

The arguments over the boarding house had less to do with its innovative nature than with its location. A boarding house was a valuable resource, access to which bestowed a comparative advantage within the community as well as between Kashmiris and other groups.

Sapru's article was the first to mention the dispute over location which was eventually to paralyse the campaign for a hostel. At this time the problem was whether it was to be constructed in Agra, the historic locus of the community, or in Allahabad, where the new leadership of the community—Ayudhia Nath Kunzru and Bishember Nath were cited—resided.[10] As Kashmiri organization spread westwards, the debate over location of the boarding house also widened. Champions of the Lahori Pandits began to voice *their* sentiments. Shortly after the Faizabadi Pandits announced formation of a National Education Fund, readers of the *Safir* were gratified to discover that the Kashmiris of Lahore were establishing their own national fund, because, after all, Lahore boasted the largest concentration of Pandits.[11] The following issue of the *Safir* contained a contribution from one of the more prolific of the Kashmiris, Brij Mohan Dattatreya. Dattatreya agreed that Lahore was the most suitable choice because Punjabi law graduates were able to practise immediately in the courts of the upper provinces while the reverse was not the case. If the boarding house was to be situated in Agra or Allahabad, the Delhi Pandit argued, it restricted the scope of a potential legal career.[12] The editor of *Safir* regularly published appeals for contributions to the Boarding House, but the traditional patrons failed to respond, and the rank and file were equally reluctant. This was especially so while the ultimate venue was still not determined. In February 1892 when it was the merits of Lahore versus Agra that were being argued, an anonymous author described how the effort of Kunwar Bahadur Mushran of Lucknow to raise funds was frustrated by the dispute.[13]

The boarding house issue involved self-interest rather than religious practice; the Pandits responded accordingly and split on a

[10]M. N. Sapru, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Jan. 1891).
[11]M. K. Ghumkhuar *Safir-i-Kashmir* (March 1891).
[12]B. M. Dattatreya, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Feb. 1891).
[13]K.B. Mushran, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Feb. 1891).

regional basis over possible location. The boarding house was not built in the lifetime of the *Safir*. It was not crucial to the community's survival, it was not vital for education. Other institutions could meet the need of Kashmiri students leaving home for the university, primarily because the Kashmiri commitment to Brahman cooks was more theoretical than real. The tradition which provided for flexibility in most situations worked well enough in this one to make the boarding house unnecessary.

The lack of agreement on this question left no serious consequences. The homes of local Kashmiris served as informal hostels; the fact that Kashmiris tended to concentrate where universities were located became a great advantage. If a Kashmiri did not have a relative conveniently situated, the small size of the community made it likely that he would at least be able to make connections and to find a Kashmiri who would take the new student under his wing. The local leaders frequently provided quarters, not only for young relatives, but also for any outstanding student Kashmiri. They thus continued to provide patronage to the community, but on an informal, individual basis. While mass associations were ultimately organized because leadership initiative was not forthcoming, in fact, local leadership continued to provide certain important services.

The question of ritual expenses seems to have been accorded priority, in both the *Murasla* and the *Safir-i-Kashmir*. The February 1873 issue of the *Murasla* was dedicated almost entirely to the problem. Kalka Prasad Kitchloo, who held a bureaucratic post in the district of Gurgaon (just south-west of Delhi), expressed his opinion that excessive expenses burdening the community were entirely due 'to the women who have no idea of money'.[14] Several others, too, thought that responsibility lay in the *zanana*.

The sensitivity of the topic made others reluctant to accept this conclusion because the matter of enlightening the female half of the community was even more problematical than the reduction of expenses. A more diplomatic approach was that adopted by an anonymous author from Agra in an article entitled 'The Beauty of our Culture', in which he contrasted the simplicity of past days with present profligacy and vulgarity. The writer stressed how previously, marriage had not always been an extravagant affair, and

[14]K. P. Kitchloo, *Murasla-i-Kashmir* (Feb. 1873).

had only recently become so.[15] He advocated not elimination of old customs but rather the return to them. If defence of tradition was at stake, the advocates of change could, it seemed, quite willingly portray themselves as its most ardent champions. The Kashmiri tradition as represented in this article was a flexible one. Tradition had been characterized historically by practicality and adaptability. 'The vulgarity that you find in the religious celebration of other Indian communities was opposed by our forefathers. They did not have dances, etc. on the occasion of *janev* and marriage. The festivals are approved by the sacred books but nowadays a lot of vulgar Indian practices are being adopted by us which is bad.'[16]

There were two elements in this argument. One was the appeal to the past flexibility and rationality of the community. The other stressed the initial simplicity of Hindu rituals. The approach was similar to that employed in the boarding-house case; linking the call for new departures both to past practice and more pious forms of behaviour than had previously been the communal norm. The purpose of a boarding house was to further the study of Sanskrit as much as English; reduction of ritual expenses was to be accompanied by a re-emphasis upon the essence of religion and re-adoption of traditional dress.

The religious argument proved more efficacious than that which stressed the secular tradition of flexibility and adaptation in the increasingly communalistic atmosphere of the late nineteenth century. One unfortunate consequence was that change was thereby circumscribed: the predominance of the conservative argument limited reform as much as facilitated it because it linked change to religion. Opportunity for a broader response was severely restricted. The appeal to religion on matters that did not necessarily require religious justification was in fact the most drastic departure of all from Kashmiri tradition.

The activist approach to expenses appealed to only a portion of the community. Its effectiveness was limited as much out of fear of its divisiveness as its extremity. The activist strategy called for such instruments of mass action as periodic assemblages and the circulation of petitions. In a letter to the *Murasla*, Sham Narain Kaul, an Assistant Commissioner, enclosed 'a document regarding the custom of marriage' in two parts; one dealing with the invitation and the other with the actual ceremony. The Pandit proposed that

[15] *Murasla-i-Kashmir* (May 1873), anon. [16] Ibid.

the manifesto be read by the community through the *Murasla* and their response communicated through the same medium. The management of the *Murasla* should then call a meeting in Lucknow of at least thirty members of the community, of which at least five were to be gurus and of the rest at least ten should be older than fifty and none younger than twenty. The effort to maintain communal unity was apparent in the suggestion that the participants should arrive at a consensus draft which would be circulated among all the Pandits, who would then be expected to sign a pledge to abide by its prescriptions. 'If in any future marriage any of those signing defied the agreed terms, they would be named in *Murasla* and mocked in the the form of cartoons.[17]

Later editions of the *Murasla* reported on the progress of this campaign—it was slow. Part of the explanation for the lack of enthusiasm was not so much that religion was being jeopardized but that material interests were. That this was the case was made evident in correspondence from Badri Nath Razdan in Lahore who explained that because 'the money goes from one house to another, there are always some people who would oppose the reform. There are many families who have become rich this way and don't need to bother about jobs.'[18] Ritual expenses, particularly those associated with marriage, were instruments of real income redistribution within the community; a fact which was frequently obscured by the theoretical terms of the debate regarding reform. But they were also a waste, for resources were consumed as well as transferred. Money spent on clothes and entertainment served no purpose other than to display wealth or passing wealth.

Kaul thought the way to work change was to establish a mass consensus founded on the obvious merit of the cause. Others felt the most effective way to implement change was through the leadership, a more traditionalist approach which stressed the exemplary role of the *buzurg*. Ratan Nath Lucknowi, clearly impatient with the community's ability to reform itself, wrote to the *Murasla*, 'It is no use to keep on writing about the reforms. The rich should reduce the expenses and the poor would gladly follow their example.'[19] Kanhaya Lal Razdan and others supported this suggestion in subsequent issues of the *Murasla*.[20]

[17]Shyam Narain Kaul, *Murasla-i-Kashmir* (Feb. 1873).
[18]R. N. Razdan, *Murasla-i-Kashmir* (Feb. 1873).
[19]R. N. Dar, *Safir-i-Kashmir*.
[20]K. L. Razdan, *Murasla-i-Kashmir* (Nov. 1873).

Seven months later, in the September issue of the *Murasla*, Ratan Nath Dar of Lakhimpur reported with great éclat that one such figure, Pandit Durga Prasad Kaul, 'a person with means', had taken the initiative in reducing marital expenses within his family. But Dar also had to add, 'it is unfortunate that a very good suggestion made by Pt. Sham Narain of getting signatures of people who agree with the suggestion of reducing expenses has failed completely. Only a few persons have signed such pledges.'[21]

By the time *Safir-i-Kashmir* came upon the scene, reform had not made much progress in the community. The need for it had, however, become more critical. 'Because of unnecessary expenses and showing off, this community has become like a sinking ship,' wrote Brij Mohan Dattatreya in despair. 'In the past, even biased emperors like Aurangzeb praised the community.'

Many agreed when S. N. Mushran declared that 'expenses are ruining all of us.'[22] But the community seemed, if anything, more divided and farther from a solution in the 1890s than it had been two decades previously.

Inder Prasad Kitchloo pleaded for a compromise position.[23] He espoused something in between the elimination of tradition and its unchanged perpetuation. Kitchloo described various customs, several of which he declared 'just exist as a way of getting money', and proposed specific limits upon the expenses associated with each. He recommended a moderate reduction immediately, promising greater reductions once the membership of the community was more educated. In one case he thought reform was hopeless because 'it is not in the power of the male Kashmiris to eliminate it', until after the females had become more enlightened.

In his analysis of the customs practised among the Kashmiris, Kitchloo stressed their historical evolution and the fashion in which their original justification had become perverted, and showed how original needs which they met had multiplied. The argument was conservative in tone, emphasizing that many common practices were neither Kashmiri in origin nor Hindu. 'In the good days of the Hindu times,' Kitchloo noted in a typical excerpt, 'there was not a custom of comparing horoscopes. Who matched Sita's horoscope?'

[21]R. N. Dar, *Murasla-i-Kashmir* (Sept. 1873).
[22]S. N. Musran, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (March 1894).
[23]I. P. Kitchloo, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (June 1891).

Kitchloo attempted to re-fashion customs to make them conform more closely to their former purpose. *Satrat*, an institution which involved presenting one's daughter with household utensils, Kitchloo thought should not be abolished, but it should be simplified. He suggested that only useful household items be given. On festival days such as *lawaz ma*, when money was given to one's daughter, Kitchloo recommended simply that a maximum sum be fixed. For other ceremonial occasions Kitchloo advocated restricting the number of recipients rather than determining the amounts of money. The custom of '*lagan ke bad, mithai*,' or the distribution of sweets after marriage, was, according to Kitchloo, a custom copied from the Muslims. The distribution had come to embrace more and more recipients. Kitchloo suggested that it be confined only to the *guru*. Where the sweets were to be presented to in-laws, Kitchloo recommended that fewer sweets be given, and that no other gifts be included in the presentation.

Kitchloo attempted to create a certain uniformity of practice as well as diminution of expense. He proposed that the money given at *langan* to the in-laws be the average of what was given in Kashmir and what was given in the plains, in the hope that reform of customs would be a means of establishing greater unity and overcoming regional divergence.

It was out of concern for the unity of the community that reformers such as Kitchloo took care not to alienate the *gurus*. The right of the *guru* to earn his livelihood from the proceeds of various rituals was always maintained. The conciliatory policy toward the *gurus* was less an acknowledgement of the ability of the *gurus* to block reform, than an expression of concern with ensuring a supply of *gurus* to meet the needs of the community. The *Murasla* and *Safir* both periodically carried warnings that the *gurus* were increasingly in short supply. A plaintive letter appearing in the fourth issue of the *Murasla* by an anonymous contributor (possibly a disgruntled *guru*, of course) noted: 'Nowadays the community does not look after the *gurus* properly and the *gurus* are educating their sons in English.'[24]

Relations between the *karkuns* and the *gurus* seem to have deteriorated during this period as both grew reluctant to maintain the traditional inherited bonds. The letter-writer already mentioned alluded to an incident in Lahore where a Kashmiri switched *gurus*

[24] *Murasla-i-Kashmir* (May 1873), anon.

after the death of his father and confiscated the property his father had bestowed on the original *guru*. In another case, a communication from Multan informed readers that a local *guru* had been arrested for murdering the son of a widow in revenge for her changing *gurus*.

Such renunciation of the hereditary *jajmani* relation with individual *gurus* was justified in another letter to the *Murasla* in November 1873 penned by one Gopi Nath Kaul, complaining of the inconsiderate behaviour of the *gurus*. In one case, a *guru* resident in Lucknow refused to attend his client's funeral in the *mufussil* because of the inconvenient journey, and sent instead a most unsatisfactory substitute in the form of a newly-arrived *guru* from Kashmir. 'In such instances,' wrote Kaul, 'the community should unite and change to another *guru*.'[25]

The general contempt for individual *gurus*, in spite of the dependence on *gurus* as a group, was evident in the response to the suggestion that *karkuns* begin marrying *gurus*.

'The *gurus* are not really learned,' Kishen Narain Shivpuri objected. 'They are not respected. If we had some learned *gurus*, they would be respected. But whether the *Karkuns* will marry with them depends upon whether the *gurus* continue to take charity.'[26] Because they were not a united group, the *gurus* did not exercise any sort of intimidation or sanction on any particular issue. But, in an economic order where individuals were beginning to exercise choice, the *guru* had an alternative to his traditional calling; and if he was to be presented with more attractive alternatives to his hereditary livelihood either because of the creation of new occupations or less favourable terms in his previous pursuits, the community would then be faced with a lack of the Kashmiri *gurus* upon whom they depended.

As individuals the *gurus* remained dispensable. As a group they were not. But they never attempted to capitalize on their potential strength and remained vulnerable to the will of their patron *karkuns*. However, their fragmentation and lack of cohesion was also a source of weakness contributing to a lack of integration within the larger community.

Reform was never clear and unidirectional. The reformers were frequently confronted by choices in which one end had to be sacrificed for another. The cause of communal unity for example could

[25] *Murasla-i-Kashmir* (May 1873), anon.
[26] K. N. Shivpuri, *Murasla-i-Kashmir* (Aug. 1873).

conflict with the effort to cut expenses. Traditionally all Kashmiris in a given locality were invited to the feast or *dawat* given on the occasion of the marriage and thread ceremonies. The fact that the poorest Kashmiri was and could expect to be invited to the residence of the wealthiest *rais* was an important element in generating a community solidarity transcending economic divisions. But by specifying that invitations be extended only to relatives, friends and special connections, in addition to recommending that the amount of food served be fixed, Kitchloo was moving the community in the direction of a more class-based group, one characterized more by socio-economic homogeneity.

Moreover, superficial westernization and the adoption of western customs often aggravated the problems, rather than solving them. The Pandits of Lahore agreed, toward the end of 1892, for example, to send cards, rather than have the *guru* go round to personally issue invitations to weddings. But, the effect was to diminish the sense of community identity, a fact perceived by the editor of *Safir* who opposed this innovation.[27]

In fact an economic transformation of the community was already under way. The Kashmiri majority was increasingly displaying the characteristics of a bourgeois class of clerks and professionals and beginning to espouse the bourgeois values of thrift and diligence. The inegalitarian relations characterizing the Kashmiris of Mughal and nawabi north India were already dissolving. But in the interest of limiting expense, Kitchloo was hastening this process, undermining the solidarity that had previously transcended socio-economic realities. Furthermore, the concern for communal welfare was often confined to the ranks of the discontented majority of Pandits who were by no means the worst-off members of the community. When Sham Narain Mushran proposed that the Lucknowi Pandits discuss the problems of the poor Kashmiris, the suggestion was received in silence.[28] Reduction of expense was designed more for the newly wealthy than for the poor; to bring the traditional and now counter-adaptive values and role models which stressed consumption and display more in line with contemporary needs.

The poor Kashmiris elicited distaste rather than concern from their more successful brethren. The article previously alluded to from the *Murasla* entitled 'The Beauty of our Culture' included

[27]A. K. Agha, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Jan. 1893).
[28]S. N. Mushran, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (March 1894).

among its admirable features the fact that 'if a Kashmiri has to do a petty job he will do it only within the community so that outsiders do not get a bad impression of the community.'[29]

Only two voices were raised to express concern for the welfare of those at the bottom. In a contribution which was published in the March 1892 issue of *Safir*, one K. L. M. from Nagpur (most probably Kanhaya Lal Munshi) proposed that the managing committees of local Paṇdit communities include the poor as well as the prosperous Kashmiris. He also charged that setting fees for the still theoretical boarding house at twenty rupees monthly constituted a bias towards the rich. 'If you can afford that sort of fee,' wrote the Pandit, 'you don't need a boarding house at all.' The Nagpuri thought the boarding house 'should be for the poor and provide free food and clothes' which would be paid for by contributions from the traditional donors, the *jagirdars* and businessmen of the community. He did not look to collective fund-raising efforts but to wealthy individuals, nothing that for example, Ajodhia Nath Kunzru had spent 10,000 to 15,000 rupees on the last Congress and planned to spend twice that amount on the next one.[30]

In spite of the efforts of reformers, spending continued to be an assertion of status that especially newly-rich Pandits were loathe to surrender. Munshi had advocated a flexible approach to the problem of expenses similar to that of Kitchloo, maintaining that families ought to give according to their capacities. The editor pointed out, however, that this was unworkable because while only a handful could really afford the extravagant levels of expenditure which had become the communal norm, all others would follow their example for fear of humiliation.[31]

The reluctance to forgo an opportunity to display status, especially newly-achieved status, prevailed among the reformers as well. 'Most marriages this year were among the liberals,' observed one A. P., 'so there was the hope that the expenses would be less. But yet they didn't spend less. They stopped the old customs and spent just as much because they had to prove they weren't cheap.'[32]

[29] *Murasla-i-Kashmir* (Feb. 1873), anon.
[30] K. L. M., *Safir-i-Kashmir* (March 1892).
[31] A. K. Agha, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (March 1892).
[32] A. P., *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Feb., 1896).

Several innovations made possible by new wealth and greater familiarity with western styles resulted in increased spending, as well. The custom of *Satoroo* illustrates the manner in which spending in new formal expressions of success continued. *Satoroo* refers to the provision of a box to an affianced daughter containing cosmetics and various adornments. Originally the box (which was generally of wood—the resource most abundant in Kashmir) was less important than its contents. The box had, however, come to be important in itself; the simple Kashmiri wood came to be rejected in favour of English style leather containers which were far more expensive. The switch was regrettable both because it imposed an additional financial demand serving no useful purpose and because it removed the Pandits of the plains just a bit more from the practices of those still in Kashmir.

Reduction of expenses was a campaign pursued with indifferent success through the lifetime of the *Murasla* and the *Safir*. The endeavour to divert funds from traditional avenues of consumption and apply them to the education of Kashmiri youths was one of two potential means of underwriting education. If diversion of money proved difficult, the alternative was to attempt to generate new sources of income. This plan was attractive for other reasons as well; in an economy moving away from ascriptive criteria, the Kashmiris found themselves overspecialized and overly dependent on service in a government that did not choose to acknowledge their hereditary claim upon it.

Diversification of livelihood was necessary for survival as well as prosperity. Schemes for communal enrichment were an important part of the contributions to the community journals as dependence on government service became less viable. At first land was considered the most lucrative avenue of future investment (not entirely as a reflection of traditional orientations), later the emphasis shifted to business.

In February 1873, the *Murasla* published 'A Suggestion for the Prosperity and Progress of the Community', indicative of the acute perception of their changing situation by at least some members of the community.[33]

'Although our people have held, and continue to hold, some

[33] *Murasla-i-Kashmir* (Feb. 1873), anon.

very high posts in the British government, they have rarely considered acquiring land. They have been happy with high positions and respect and have not bothered to become landlords. This is perhaps because before British times, jobs with the government gave much more authority and prestige. Even petty government officials could command big landlords. Our community is very sensitive and has a lot of self-respect and would rather serve the government which bestows prestige even if there is less money compared to being a landlord. But now, under the British, things are changed. People with land are respected and honoured by the government. It is a matter of pleasure that some members of our community have recently started buying land and villages and it can be hoped that soon they will become *taluqdars*. But this will only benefit a few members of the community. What we need is a collective effort on the part of the community so all can share in the benefits. We should acquire a 'riyasat' [property] that would belong to the community. This would be the end of our existence as outsiders. We should collect capital of 4-5 lakhs by selling shares of Rs 500 each. A group of respectable members of the community should use this capital to buy land and villages. An Englishman or a Parsi should be appointed manager of the property and should distribute the profits among the shareholders. The region of Oudh is most appropriate for this venture. After the Mutiny and other happenings, the landlords in this area are in financial difficulty and are mortgaging and selling their villages. We should make an effort to buy from them.'

This article has been reproduced at great length for several reasons. It revealed firstly, a sharp understanding of the new British policy of supporting the *taluqdars*. The author recognized that *taluqdari* status could now be acquired by purchase as well as by heredity, that the *taluqdars* were not a closed circle whose membership was determined only at birth.

The article also expressed the sentiment beginning to prevail that Kashmiri accomplishments were no longer to be measured solely by those of their leaders. 'What benefits only a few members' was considered inadequate.

Moreover, the author took note of opportunities exploited by Kashmiris in the mobile social circumstances of post-Mutiny north India. The degree to which land purchase formed a solution to problems peculiar to the community was also acknowledged. The

suggestion that the community as a whole acquire villages was advanced specifically as a way of overcoming the felt insecurity of the Kashmiris as a small and a foreign group. Land 'would be the end of our existence as outsiders.'

Concern for the community's welfare was translated into an intense interest in the achievements and actions of individual Kashmiris. If land was considered desirable, those who bought and sold land could be expected to be commented upon in the pages of the *Murasla*. Individuals were accountable for their deeds. Thus the Kashmiri community was informed, in September 1873, that 'a member of the community from Delhi has sold his share of the ancestral property in Karnal to an outsider in preference to his cousin.' This information was followed by an editorial comment: 'This is bad. He should have sold it to his cousin and not outside the community.'[34]

The acquisition of land as the means of achieving material well-being and a sense of belonging was a logical answer for the Pandits of north India. A bit more surprising was the suggestio that the community consider investing in property in Kashmir itself. This idea was advanced by one Badri Nath Razdan in a letter printed in May 1873. The letter took the form of a series of queries which expressed both the Pandit's ignorance about Kashmir and the hope that Kashmir would provide solutions to the community's malaise in the plains.[35] Razdan wished to discover as much as possible about the price of land in Kashmir and its availability. But beyond this, he was eager to learn about the general situation of Pandits who remained in his homeland. In Razdan's inquiries, as in the 'Suggestion' the concern for material security was the most visible manifestation of a lack of ease transcending purely economic circumstances.

Razdan wondered if the Pandits of Kashmir owned much land and whether they themselves cultivated whatever they possessed. He wanted to learn what the position of the Pandits was under the Dogra Raj: 'Are they preferred; treated as equals, or discriminated against? Our community holds high jobs under the British, such as Tehsildar, Kotwal, Assistant Commissioner, etc. Do we have similar positions in the Maharaja's darbar? If yes, do these jobs pay as well as they do in India?'

[34] *Murasla-i-Kashmir* (Sept. 1873).
[35] B. N. Razdan, *Murasla-i-Kashmir* (May 1873).

In addition to these material questions, Razdan asked about the customs of the 'upstairs' Kashmiris; did they eat meat, even that meat slaughtered by a Muslim butcher? Where were their pilgrimage places? The contemplation of land purchase in Kashmir was part of a general renewal of interest in Kashmir and the Kashmiris of their homeland. As the sense of weakness and vulnerability grew in the Pandits of the plains, a sense of unity embracing those beyond the confines of north India seemed a satisfactory device for increasing the size of the effective group.

Links had not been totally severed, but this was not necessarily due to a commitment to those ties on the part of the migrants. As has been indicated, those in the plains tended to have achieved more or identified with those who remained behind. They regarded the Kashmiris of Kashmir as inferior. 'They spit on those who stayed in Kashmir, they separated themselves and formed their own community in attitude.'[36] Marriage connections lapsed for want of enthusiasm on both sides.

If the Kashmiris in the plains saw those in Kashmir as inferior, those in the valley regarded the departed as at least different; they had forgotten their customs, they had grown darker under the cruel north Indian sun. Lack of knowledge also tended to inhibit marital alliances.[37]

Propositions aimed at a restoration of ties had to overcome these attitudes and objections. Writers tended to stress past links, but occasionally statements are found which indicate ongoing communication. One author who attempted to demonstrate the obligations of the migrants to their homeland mentioned that issueless parents frequently adopted babies from Kashmir.[38] But generally, 'only Kashmiris are ashamed to speak their mother tongue and look down on the *tazi vilayat*, the newly arrived, as if their own forefathers had not been born in Kashmir.[39]

[36]B. M. Dattatreya, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Oct.-Nov. 1891).

[37]Justice S. N. Katju recalled that one of his ancestors had, a century ago, returned to Kashmir and taken a second wife, while his first wife was still alive, although the Kashmiris of Kashmir were unaware of the first marriage. This sort of incident created a legacy of distrust between the plains Pandits and the Pandits of Kashmir.

[38]This was also alluded to by several informants who said that the babies were bought from poor Kashmiris. It is however a touchy point.

[39]M. N. Sapru, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (May 1891).

Land purchase in Kashmir was one facet in a programme of regeneration through renewed contact with the Homeland. This was one of the most consistent themes of the *Murasla*. Inder Narain Gurtoo from Kanpur suggested that a Council of Elders be established in Kashmir through the Maharaja whose function it would be to comment monthly in the pages of the journal 'so we can return to the ways of our homeland.'[40] If the Pandits were to be perceived as Kashmiris in spite of their long residence in the plains, furthermore, self-interest dictated a defense of their identity as Kashmiris. Private contempt for those remaining behind was to be accompanied by public declarations of the pedigree and purity of the Kashmiri Brahmans.

Unfortunately, because aspersions on the Pandits emanated from orthodox Hindus, proof of status came to lie in proof of orthodoxy rather than assertion of tolerance and secularism—the Mughal values had been replaced by far more narrow, sectarian considerations. In December 1872 an anonymous author from Allahabad called for 'research on our ancestors to prove that we are descendants of the most sacred Brahmins.' The author quoted from 'a book by a British priest who says that although the Brahmanical culture started from Kashmir, the Kashmir Brahmins are not included in the ten most sacred groups of contemporary Brahmins.' The author referred as well to a book by a Bengali babu who maintained the status of the Pandits was low.[41]

'Such remarks,' the disgruntled Kashmiri wrote, 'are possible only because we have forgotten our history. The prejudice of the Muslims has ruined us and our way of life and greatly altered our tradition.'

Later contributions to the community journals met the need both for information and ammunition. Articles conveying basic facts about Kashmir were accompanied by positive evaluations of the Pandits of the valley. The June 1891 issue of *Safir* included two articles about Kashmir. An anonymous one entitled 'Some Interesting Things about Kashmir' described the route from Jammu to Srinagar for those interested in undertaking the journey; supplying

[40]I. N. Gurtoo, *Murasla-i-Kashmir* (Feb. 1873).

[41]*Murasla-i-Kashmir* (Dec. 1872), anon. It is likely that the Allahabadi Pandit was alluding to the Reverend Sherring and a Bengali who authored the 1865 census of the Northwest Provinces.

information about the cost of the trip and possible resting places on the way. The other, 'The Way of Life of the Kashmiri Pandit in Kashmir', by Inder Narain Kishen Kaul, moved from a simple description of dress in the valley to an idealized portrait of the Pandits of the valley. Unlike the Pandits of north India, the Kashmiris were said to have simple rituals, without the fuss and formality of ceremonies in the plains. But their simplicity was not due to lack of sophistication. At a time when the valley contained only a handful of English literates and virtually no educational facilities, the Kashmiris had, according to Kaul, fully adopted an English way of life. 'They are intelligent and learned and strong.' As in the plains, the Pandits were engaged mostly in service, but if unable to obtain it, Kaul asserted, they took to business (which just happened to be the recommended livelihood for Pandits in the plains). This sort of article was designed for internal consumption. There were others which provided the Kashmiris with a religious interpretation of their origins and history and were meant to enable the Kashmiris effectively to refute aspersions cast on their lack of orthodoxy. Tribhuwan Nath Sapru 'Hijr' wrote: 'All religion is just a branch of the river which is the Hindu religion. Within Hinduism all streams are equal and fine and superior to the worship of one god.'[42] Having thus disposed of Christianity against Hinduism on the basis of the universality of the latter, Hijr went on to contradict his statement that all the varieties of Hinduism were equally valid by declaring that he was 'proud that his community descends from the rishis of Aryavarta' and was therefore, the highest form of Hinduism.

History, as well as antecedents, became a source of pride. An anonymous article on the 'Population of Kashmir and its Customs'[43] contained the following argument: 'Of all areas of India, Kashmir is unique . . . in that thousands of years ago all the inhabitants of Kashmir were Brahmans. Muslim kings have always had a strong hatred for the people living in Kashmir for two reasons. [The first is] Kashmir is very close to the areas where people had accepted Islam, so they hated those Kashmiris who had not converted. The second reason was because most of the inhabitants of Kashmir were Brahmans, they were a special target. For these two reasons, Muslim rulers made an all-out effort to destroy Kashmiri

[42]T. N. Sapru 'Hijr', *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Dec. 1890).
[43]*Safir-i-Kashmir* (Dec. 1895), anon.

culture. Under these conditions that even a few Kashmiri Brahmans are alive is an accomplishment. These people have had very brave ancestors who were real Hindus. In most of India only very rich people connected with the Muslim court and very poor people converted to Islam. In Kashmir it was different. The rich and influential families stuck to their culture and religion in spite of all kinds of threats. There were innumerable things they were told to do, such as not to wear a pig tail, not say namaste, not to call Shankaryacharya hill in Srinagar Koh-i-Sulaman, not to refer to themselves as pandits, not to wear a certain style of turban, not to wear shoes. But only the poorest people from our community lost their religion either out of force or necessity. This is proved by the fact that all the lowest professions are dominated by Muslims.' Historically, then, the Brahmans of Kashmir had suffered most for their religion; rather than evoking a tradition of mutual forbearance and tolerance, Kashmiri contributors to the *Murasla* recalled their history as a sort of martyrdom.

If Kashmir itself was made to provide a defense against charges from a hostile external environment, it was also used to provide a solution to the internal malaise of the Pandits. 'If we do not want to be rootless gypsies [*khanabadosh*] then we have to reconnect with Kashmir and our ancient home,'[44] wrote B.M Dattatreya in 1893. But the plan to purchase land in Kashmir was never really implemented. Later there was a limited reverse migration as Pandits came to be employed by the Kashmiri darbar, but they were introduced to the Dogra Raj more for their familiarity with British political and administrative norms than for their knowledge of local ways.

Suggestions that the Pandits of the plains study the Kashmiri language or invest in land in Kashmir were not practical ones. For all their efforts and literary endeavours, the attitude of the north Indian Pandits remained as lofty as ever despite their perceived geographical and economic downturn.

The suggestion that the Kashmiris convert themselves into a landowning class was less frequently raised in the pages of the *Safir* than in the *Murasla*. Perhaps the incongruity of the *taluqdari* role with the traditional occupation of most Pandits became evident;

[44]B. M. Dattatreya, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Jan. 1893).

possibly it was merely the apparent impracticality of the scheme. Twenty years after the demise of the *Murasla*, business replaced land as the most lucrative potential avenue of enterprise.

Business would have seemed a more viable and natural alternative for the Pandits than landownership because it was urban oriented and required literacy. It seemed curious that the Kashmiris had never participated in trade on any significant scale. Kashmir was the source of many of the goods sought by the Mughal court and its satellite imitators. And if demand for these luxury articles declined as the impoverishment of the north Indian nobility grew, it was replaced by a newly aroused European appetite which did not diminish until the Franco-Prussian war of 1877. Yet the trade in luxury goods from Kashmir to the plains was almost exclusively controlled by Kashmiri Muslims and Punjabi Khattris.

Kashmiri reformers of the late nineteenth-century attributed this reluctance to the Pandits' insecurity. Analyses in the community journals depicted the Kashmiri as loathe to take the risks required in business. Later interpretations stressed the honesty of the community, and contrasted this with the dishonesty demanded in the business world, but in the pages of *Safir* this was specifically rejected as a possible explanation, in favour of the theory that the uncertainty which is part of the mercantile environment was foreign to the Kashmiri mentality which sought safety, guarantees of success, and a regular salary rather than uncertain profits.

An article entitled simply 'Business' appearing in 1891, asked of the community, 'When will they realize service is, in reality, slavery? Because they do not want to take any risks, they are not getting any of the profits of other communities.'[45]

The editor of *Safir*, Avtar Kishen Agha, wrote four months later an article which glorified trade and business, and impressed upon the community that wealth, rather than status, should become the aim of communal action. The British may have elevated the landowning class within India, but it was through trade, Agha noted, that the British achieved *their* pre-eminent position and it was by this path that the Kashmiris could similarly improve their material circumstances.[46]

Wealth as a goal of life was given its place in orthodox Hindu thinking as the second stage of life; that of the worldly householder. Yet in the Kashmiri social culture, wealth as a product of

[45] *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Dec. 1890), anon.
[46] A. K. Agha, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (March 1891).

business practice seemed wrong, the agenda for reform proposed by many Pandits called for rethinking 'to make business not wrong'. This apparently was not easy. The community retained its suspicion of commercial enterprise, and those Pandits who hoped that community solidarity would lead to commercial endeavours were disappointed.

Dattatreya proposed that the Kashmiris launch a joint stock company or a co-operative store wherever more than sixty members of the community resided, providing 'British and Indian clothes, groceries, foreign medicines and textbooks' to its clientèle. He thought a starting capital of 5000 rupees would be sufficient and practical because it was not a donation or charity upon which the money would be spent.[47] But the community had attempted to launch several ventures previous to Dattatreya's summons, and earlier attempts had hardly met with resounding success.

The Kashmiri community had inaugurated a 'Kashmiri Trading Bank' in 1882, with agents in Allahabad, Kanpur, Lucknow, Calcutta and Faizabad, through a movement started in the *Murasla*. (This is according to the *Safir*;[48] unfortunately the issues of the *Murasla* broaching this project are unavailable.) It was claimed that the Bank had paid out one per cent profit annually to its members, but in spite of this, members of the community failed to support it. A leather factory had been established by Mohan Kishen and Piare Kishen Dar in Agra: This had the support of the English; the factory supplied the army and had as its 'patron' the Commander-in-Chief, whose participation should have provided sufficient reassurances to the community. Despite pleas that the undertaking 'will not flourish unless the community buys shares', the Kashmiris remained uninterested.

To make business appear attractive to the Kashmiris and overcome the personal disinclination for business and the innate suspicion with which the community regarded even Kashmiri commercial ventures, the reformers had to place new role models and ideals before the community. These the Parsi community provided.[49] The choice of the Parsi community as the Kashmiri standard is an instructive one because it is both curious and natural, and reveals something of Kashmiri self-perception and aspiration.

[47]Dattatreya, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Oct.-Nov 1891).
[48]*Safir-i-Kashmir* (Dec. 1890), anon.
[49]Ibid.

To an outsider, the identification with the Parsis which was expressed in the *Safir* was not obvious. The Parsis came from Persia which was far less integrated into Indian culture than was Kashmir. The Parsis were Zoroastrians, the Kashmiris were Hindus; Parsi customs such as placing their dead upon towers to become food for vultures were considered strange by all Indians, Kashmiri habits at most were regarded as just unorthodox. That the Kashmiris chose to find an affinity with the Parsis was expressive of a certain alienation. The Kashmiris too saw themselves as foreigners in India, as migrants who had achieved much in their new surroundings. And both communities were small, literate and urban.

The differences of the two emerged in a comparison between their contemporary situations. The Kashmiris found themselves on the decline, while the Parsis seemed to be flourishing because the strengths of the Parsi community were precisely those the Kashmiris lacked. The Parsis had a sense of community, the Pandits did not. The Parsis had a sense of charity, the Kashmiris did not. The Parsis educated their women, the Panditanis were ignorant. And finally, the Parsis became involved in business and grew rich while the Kashmiris were not and did not. Business, which was originally rejected by the Kashmiris because it offered no security, yielding uncertain profits rather than a predictable pension, now seemed less uncertain relative to government service with its changing criteria of recruitment.

Shiv Narain Raina 'Shamim' declared that 'the Parsees have all the qualities of the British. They are big businessmen, some of whom could buy up the whole of the Punjab. The first member of Parliament was a Parsi. The community has numerous doctors, barristers, pleaders, engineers and clerks. But they are still very religious.'[50]

Agha lamented that 'we could also be looked upon with respect like the Parsis are. The situation of the two communities is similar. They came from Persia and we came from Kashmir. In their way of life and their beauty they are similar. The difference is that they are educated and follow their religion. On the other hand, our Pandits are unaware of their religion and involved in their personal rivalries.'[51]

[50]Shiv Narain Raina 'Shamim', *Safir-i-Kashmir* (June 1894).
[51]A. K. Agha, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (June 1894).

The Kashmiris' predilection for self-scrutiny resulted in a constant appraisal of their situation relative to that of other groups as well as their past. Early contributors to the *Safir* feared the Kashmiris would soon fall to the bottom of the social heap 'and our condition will become like that of the Mohammadans'.[52] Later authors despaired that even the Muslims had their Saiyid Ahmad Khan who was leading that community into the nineteenth century, albeit tardily, while the Kashmiris lacked similar leadership. 'Our situation is like that of the Muhammadans fifteen years ago, before Saiyid Ahmad Khan,' noted Maharaj Kishen Ghumkhuar in December 1890.[53] Ghumkhuar hoped that the community journal would somehow fill the vacuum in communal leadership, a hope shared by Kitchloo who observed that the Kayastha community effort to advance is due to their community organ.'[54]

The Kashmiris were well aware of the Bengali infiltration of the north Indian service; readers were invited to contrast their situation with 'the Bengali babus who came to Kanpur and Allahabad with nothing and now have everything.'[55] The Bengalis were praised along with the Parsis and the English as progressive models for the Kashmiris to emulate, their company was recommended to the community.[56] The Bengalis, it was said, were very learned. 'Bengali professors are everywhere,' exclaimed Shiv Narain Raina Shamim, 'even in Aligarh the Mathematics professor is a Bengali. They also care for their community. If one Bengali gets a job someplace, soon the whole place will be full of Bengalis. The British are terrified that if there is a civil service exam in India, no Britisher will be able to pass and Bengalis will take over the whole civil service.[57]

Obsession with the declining material standing of the Kashmiris was reflected in a constant measuring of the relative progress of other social groups. Although this concern was real, it was never divorced, however, from a more fundamental, longstanding sense

[52]I. P. Kitchloo, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Jan. 1891)
[53]M. K. Ghumkhuar, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Dec. 1890).
[54]I. P. Kitchloo, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Nov. 1890).
[55]*Safir-i-Kashmir* (Dec. 1895), anon.
[56]A. K. Agha, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (March 1892).
[57]S. N. Raina 'Shamim', *Safir-i-Kashmir* (June 1891).

of insecurity. The interest in a Sanskritic education should be understood not merely as part of the general trend toward improved status on orthodox Hindu terms which characterized newly mobile segments of Hindu communities, but also as a development which can be explained with reference to the specific situation of the Pandits. Sanskritic education was part of a self-conscious campaign to conform to newly-dominant elements in the social environment. The Kashmiris were motivated more by the desire of the foreigner to be accepted by the majority, by the desire to conform, than the desire to advance ambitious claims. The Kashmiri Brahmans sought obscurity rather than pre-eminence.

Language is an element expressive of the basic identity and relations of any social group. The advocacy of Sanskrit represented fundamental shifts in the social network of the Kashmiris. The study of Sanskrit was not seen as an incremental task, it involved the repudiation of previous choices. None of the contributors to the *Safir* dismissed the necessity of acquiring knowledge of English, despite qualms over the consequences of a westernized education. But many of those concerned with the future of the community felt that it no longer lay in knowledge of Persian. 'If they can only learn two languages,' counselled Dattatreya in February 1891, 'let them be Sanskrit and English.' Sanskrit was a means of overcoming the community's traditional distance from other Hindus in the plains, and if it meant severing links with Muslims, Dattatreya observed that 'Muhammadan children know more about their religion than we do about ours.'[58]

The two themes voiced repeatedly in the pages of the community journals were that the Pandits were outsiders in India, and had to join with each other and begin to identify with the majority Hindu community. To achieve the latter goal, a conscious programme of deliberate de-Islamicization was launched. The call for renewed study of Sanskrit was one facet of the plan.

'When we lived under the Hindu rajas, we were the most authentic Hindus after the Kashi Hindus. When we were under the Muslim rulers, we very smoothly changed our way of life, clothes and language. Muslims thought we were half Muslims. In fact, we imitated them to such an extent that many of our wedding customs were taken from them. Moreover, we tried to please the emperors

[58]Dattatreya, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Feb. 1891).

so much that we did not object to food and water touched by Muslims. Although we did not eat with them, we did everything else to gain their favour. Now the British have taken their place and English has replaced Persian. We must try to get close to the British as we did the Muslims, and adopt their culture and way of life.' If the Muslims were regarded as foreigners, invaders, then those who had assimilated themselves to the Muslims were equally distanced from India.

The role of women in the community at this time is far from clear. The contemporary image of the Pandit community as a liberated one in which the women are given both education and power suggests that women have always played a dominant role in community affairs. In these years, however, as is evident from articles and letters in the community journals, the women were largely ill-educated. Their influence was generally negative; consisting of an ability to obstruct rather than to control. If their cause was championed in the pages of the *Murasla-i-Kashmir* or the *Safir-i-Kashmir*, it was because some felt that only with the support of Kashmiri women could reforms, particularly in the matter of ceremonial expenditures, be implemented. Activists suggested rather pointedly that it was with women that the demands for fireworks and other extravagances originated.[59]

The sentiment in favour of extending education to the Panditanis was frequently conservative—education was to be a religious education designed to eliminate superstition rather than promote enlightenment. Education was justified just because it did not necessarily threaten a husband's control of his spouse. 'Sita was educated and she was not disobedient,' argued M.N. Sapru in a letter to the *Safir*.[60]

If female education was urged on the community, it was less from concern for the women than the need for a wife to understand her husband and raise her children.[61] It was male alienation rather than female isolation that was feared.

[59]Ram Narain Tikku, Tehsildar of Aligarh, *Murasla-i-Kashmir* (Aug. 1873).

[60]M. N. Sapru, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (May 1891).

[61]Brij Mohan Dattatreya, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (January 1892). Later, however, female education proved a liability in securing a spouse. (See Rama Rau, *An Inheritance*, p. 50.)

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Customs and traditions that particularly victimized women did not elicit general concern. Reformers did not undertake campaigns against those men who had more than one wife. Although the plight of widows was debated in the pages of the community journals from the 1890s, there was little action. In 1895, Shambu Nath Goghai, the first Indian to be named a judge of a High Court, attempted to arrange a second marriage for his widowed daughter in Calcutta. 'Even after the Justice obtained religious approval based on the Shastras,' wrote Dattatreya to the *Safir*, 'he failed to remarry her.'[62] In the 1920s, Lakshmi Dhar Kalla, a Kashmiri *purohit* of Delhi and a great scholar who taught Sanskrit at Delhi University, attempted to mobilize support for the remarriage of Kashmiri widows. Despite his endeavours, as late as 1940 not a single widow in the community had been remarried.[63] Most activists confined themselves to recommending that the community find suitable (and lucrative) occupations for the Panditani widows, rather than husbands.[64]

Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Kashmiri women were as tightly wrapped in the binds of pardah as the upper-class Muslim and Kayastha women in neighbouring *muhallas*. As late as 1873, one Pandit wrote to the *Murasla* to recommend that the women of the community adopt *burqas* such as were worn in Kabul. These, wrote Bihari Lal Kitchloo (then Extra Assistant Commissioner in his home base of Amritsar), were 'suitable because they conceal all, especially in cities where women are especially exposed to strangers.'[65] Of all the restraints imposed by convention upon the women, pardah, it seemed was the restraint that Kashmiri males were most reluctant to remove. Long after it was acknowledged that literacy was a desirable quality in a spouse, the women were kept secluded, typically receiving their education from governesses at home (usually these governesses were Anglo-Indian) rather than attending school. Formal education, noted one Panditani, was considered 'immodest'.[66]

In only one respect was the Kashmiri community different from

[62]Dattatreya. *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Dec. 1895).
[63]Kashi Prasad Dar, *Bahar-i-Kashmir* (June 1940).
[64]Kailash Narain Kaul, *Report of the Second All India Kashmiri Pandit Conference*, Delhi (March 1931). Address by Brij Narain Tankhwah, pp. 26-7.
[65]B. L. Kitchloo, *Murasla-i-Kashmir* (Jan. 1873).
[66]Rama Rau, *An Inheritance*, p. 133.

comparable social groups. There was no pardah within the community itself. Panditanis were secluded only from non-Kashmiris. But if this was a concession, it favoured the young of both sexes rather than the women exclusively.

The lack of support for reforms giving women greater freedom was evident, finally, in the fact that Kashmiri centres were the most restrictive localities for women. In most realms, social change was initiated at the centre, gradually radiating out. But it was at the outer bounds of the Pandits' world, where opposition could not be organized, that restraints upon women were first relaxed.

The very debate about reforms and unity proved to be a contentious one. And when a Kashmiri Pandit by the name of Bishen Narain Dar decided to go to England to qualify for the bar, the community split in a division that lasted, in some families, for over fifty years.

CHAPTER XII

# Vilayati Education and Pandit Bishen Narain Dar

Bishen Narain Dar, the Lucknowi Pandit whose decision to go to England was to paralyse the community for half a century, was the son of Kishen Narain, a *munsif* of the city, and the grandson of Hari Ram Dar. Hari Ram had migrated from Kashmir at the beginning of the nineteenth century and served as *Akhbar Navis* for the Nawab of Avadh in Calcutta.[1] Bishen Narain was part of the circle of disciples who clustered about Shiv Narain 'Bahar', the editor of the *Murasla*.

This circle established a 'Kashmiri Young Men's Club', the first of a series of associations by that name. Its original purpose was to purify the habits of male Kashmiris and to discourage Nawabi habits of indulgence and addiction. It also provided access to information about modern society. Later, the goal of the Young Men's Association was simply to heal the great rift in the community caused by Bishen Narain's trip to England.

The members of the club were both residents of Lucknow and Kashmiris whose fathers were stationed outside Lucknow, in Hardoi, Faizabad, or Farrukhabad, but whose base and ties were in Lucknow. There seems to have been no occupational pattern among the fathers of the young Kashmiris; government servants, zamindars, professionals, educationists, all were represented on the rolls. The small size of the community seems to have been fairly instrumental in creating a generational solidarity, of which the association was one expression. What bound the members further was a common educational experience, almost all had been or were attending the Canning College, which had been established in Lucknow the year of Bishen Narain's birth in 1864.[2]

[1] *Who's Who in India* (Lucknow, 1911), p. 221.

[2] *Report of the Department of Public Instruction*, 1875-6, p. 82. The conclusions

At Canning College Kashmiri students came into contact with Pandit Pran Nath, a teacher in the school and at the time that Bishen Narain Dar departed for England, President of the Kashmiri Young Men's Association. It was Pran Nath who suggested to Bishen Narain that he consider undertaking the trip to England.

Of Pran Nath, one Kashmiri wrote, 'The zeal and interest he has displayed in bettering the moral and intellectual status of his fellow-brethren especially of tender years, command every respect and eulogy that may be offered to him.'[3]

In a speech delivered to the Carlyle Society in London, Bishen Narain described his departure as follows: 'Being the first of my sect who intended to visit England, I had to manage everything very secretly; nobody with the exception of a few friends and relatives knew anything about my resolve until I had actually left India, and then there was a commotion in my society and those who were supposed to be my instigators were excommunicated. I myself received a telegram in Suez to return home at once; I did not mind the telegram and my friends did not mind their excommunication.'[4]

This was, if anything, an understatement. Readers of the Lahore *Tribune* of 17 May 1884, were confronted by an article entitled 'Agitation in the Cashmiri Quarters' detailing the uproar in the community.

> Having borrowed Rs 3,000 from a friend, he proceeded to London on the 21 March in the company of Professor Gaul of the College. On his departure from Bombay, he wrote a letter to his father explaining his intentions and soliciting pecuniary assistance. As the irony of luck would have it he [the father] although an educated gentleman holding a respectable post in the British administration Government, communicated the news to some orthodox Kashmiris of that place who at once betook themselves to find out the pre-supposed culprit alleged to have assisted the youth and pronounced the sentence of excommunication upon Pandit Pran Nath.

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expressed here are based on the cumulative information of various informants, particularly Janak Dulari Kaul (Ogra); the biographies of individual Kashmiris contained in *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*; the reproduction of an article on the Club printed in the Bombay organ of the Kashmiri Pandits kindly lent to me by Chief Justice P.N. Bakhsi of the Allahabad High Court; and a description of the Club by Bishen Narain Dar, *Speech to the Canning College Student Association*, Lucknow, 16 Dec. 1913 (Nellore, 1913).

[3] *The Tribune*, Lahore, 17 May 1886.

[4] B. N. Dar, *The Caste System in India, A Speech Delivered at the Carlyle Society*, 4 Nov. 1886 (London, 1888), p. 10.

> The matter has disturbed the harmony of community and has assumed an aspect which, it is feared, if not decried in time, will for another century to come annihilate the hopes and expectations of the rising generation of this community, of raising itself in the estimation of the benign government ruling over this vast country.
>
> Needless it would be to say that nothing could be expected toward the regeneration of India, which has already suffered much in consequence of the superstitious customs prevalent among the majority of its inhabitants from such men who nevertheless style themselves as guides and guardians of the intelligent youths of the community .... And above all, has India begotten men to merely find means for their livelihood? Has she no claim upon them to raise her up to the level of other civilized countries?
>
> Can there be a greater anomaly than what has been evinced on this occasion? I feel no hesitation to say these men appear to be wholly and entirely devoid of the sense of gratitude they owe to [Pandit Pran Nath]. In conclusion I am very glad to inform you that several sensible and conscientious members of the community have volunteered themselves to side with and countenance him, and it is hoped that the opponents will, after the rebuff they have sustained, reconcile themselves with him and his friends.[5]

The fears expressed in the *Tribune* article proved a more accurate appraisal of the communal response than Bishen Narain Dar's prediction. In the speech delivered while the Pandit was still in London, Dar informed his audience, 'The agitation lasted for about six months, and a number of articles appeared in the papers condemning my conduct and holding me up as a terrible warning to future generations. Now as my time for returning to India is drawing near, the orthodox party has begun to bestir itself and organize its forces in order to cut me off upon my arrival in India; the struggle between my sympathizers and the orthodox party will be fierce and no one can be sure of the outcome. Still, it is quite possible—nay to me it seems probable that my opponents in order to avoid a conflict, may make certain concessions in my favour and say they would take me back among themselves upon my performing *Prashchit*.'[6]

In a note appended to the published text of the speech, written shortly after the new barrister's return to Lucknow, in July of 1887, Dar added,

> I have been taken back into my society, but after undergoing a nominal penance. In my sect the opposition was very strong and well organized.

[5]*The Tribune*, Lahore, 17, May 1884.
[6]Dar, *Caste System*, p.11.

The efficacy of *Prashchit* was altogether denied in my case. My offence, it was vehemently asserted, deserved nothing short of excommunication. Under these circumstances it was thought expedient to perform *Prashchit* in order to reconcile those who had no religious scruples in joining me, but who were not bold enough to act in defiance of public opinion. *Prashchit* has to a great extent mitigated the severities of the struggle which has been going on in my society ever since my arrival in this country.

My society is at present divided into two sections, the one being the incarnation of the average darkness of the hour, representing the forces of orthodoxy and tradition; the other consisting of men of liberal views developed and matured under the influence of English education—men who have forever broken with the traditions of the past and embraced the creed of modern civilization in its entirety. This split is likely to last for a year or two; and it does not require any prophet to tell us that the final victory belongs to the party of progress.

The two sections to which Dar referred were known as Bishen Sabha, adherents of which supported the returnee, and the Dharm Sabha, made up of those who refused to accept him. The two sabhas did not necessarily correspond to a reformer *vs* orthodox cleavage because in many ways the reformers were more concerned with the religious traditions of the community than were the orthodox. Nor was the division generational, because of the pressure put on younger members of the family to conform to the injunctions of their elders. The *zamindari* Pandits, those who held leadership positions within the community tended to be Dharm Sabha, for any new sources of power from without brought to bear within the community would result in a reduction of their power. But this was by no means an absolute pattern; and the leaders of many of the smaller Pandit enclaves, who may also have been *zamindars*, frequently espoused the sort of reform that the Bishen Sabhas represented. Occupation provided no infallible guide for predicting into which camp a Pandit would fall; the lawyers might well oppose the trip to England (which resulted in status superior to their own) in spite of their support of English education and progress in other realms. Region determined more the intensity of controversy than specific alignment; the dispute travelled across north and central India, reaching the Punjab and ultimately Kąshmir, but its force was not of the same strength in Lahore as it was in Lucknow.

The issue of sea voyages and education abroad occasioned much

debate in groups such as the Kayasthas whose situation was comparable to that of the Pandits but nowhere else was the debate so intense or the consequences for the unity of the entire community so great. Objections to *vilayati* education among the Kayasthas were grounded far more in material considerations than upon religious grounds, as was true for the Pandits. In examining the Kayastha response to the issue, Lucy Carroll concluded that personal factors were of overriding significance. 'A social issue like a sea voyage could easily be converted into a . . . tactical weapon for use in a factional struggle."[7] Other factors, such as the espousal of nationalist politics by advocates of foreign education, or regional context may have played a role, but generally: 'The sea voyage controversy provided an outlet for the jealousy and resentment with which India-trained *vakils* often regarded those who may not have even achieved a B.A. degree and yet, because they were able to afford three years in England, leap-frogged their stay-at-home colleagues at the Bar and monopolized the most lucrative cases and the most prestigious appointments.'

For the Kashmiris, obsessed with the vulnerability inherent in their small numbers, and the need for unity, the division was traumatic, more traumatic than the problem of merely going abroad. Pandits concerned with expanding the boundaries of the group suddenly found the community effectively reduced by half; attempt at change resulted in paralysis, efforts to promote initiative resulted in withdrawal. And the fact that the community was so equally divided meant that an early compromise was unlikely.

The first casualty of the dispute was the *Murasla*. In September 1886, a few months before Bishen Narain's return, the income of the magazine had declined to one rupee;[8] a far cry from the days when its editor announced that it intended 'to provide help and support to the needy of the community in Kashmir from the money it has received in excess of its expenses."[9] The following month, publication was suspended because 'people became biased against the magazine and made certain of its failure.[10] Shortly after the *Murasla* ceased to appear, its editor died.

[7]Lucy Carroll, 'The Seavoyage Controversy and the Kayasthas of North India, 1901-1909', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (1979), p. 298.

[8]A. K. Agha, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Nov. 1890).

[9]S. N. Bahar, *Murasla-i-Kashmir*, No. 8 (May 1873).

[10]Agha, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Nov. 1890).

Contributions to the *Safir* voiced the fear that was the predominant legacy of the controversy, both by urging the new editor not to mention anything that would further divide the community and in commenting directly on the division. Even the slightest suggestion for the most minor reform provoked the reminder that the community could ill-afford additional disputes. Thus, for example, when Manohar Nath Sapru, writing from Faizabad, wished to know whether the community should uniformly employ *namaskar* rather than *namaste*, the editor rebuked him for injecting a potentially contentious issue into the pages of *Safir* noting 'we already have enough controversy over Bishen Sabha-Dharm Sabha.' It was an oft-repeated refrain.[11]

Inder Prasad Kitchloo observed four years after the return of Bishen Narain Dar, that the issue had completely taken over the Pandits' lives. 'It is a shame,' he wrote, 'that at a time when everyone else is involved in all-India matters, [he was referring to the Indian National Congress which had just met in Nagpur] we do nothing. All we do is eat, drink, sleep and discuss Bishen Sabha and Dharam Sabha.'[12]

The reformers seemed somewhat taken aback by the abrupt withdrawal of support when the reform that had been discussed in theoretical terms so long was finally acted upon. In his correspondence with the *Safir*, Inder Prasad referred to all those who spoke out in favour of reform but subsequently proved themselves opponents of education abroad. 'Nobody follows their conscience,' he remarked bitterly.[13]

The hypocrisy of the nominal advocates of reform was surpassed only by the hypocrisy of the Dharm Sabhites, according to other contributors to the *Safir*. One of the strongest attacks on the Dharm Sabha came from 'Azad', a regular corespondent from Malwa, in August 1895. Azad accused the Dharm Sabhites of unorthodox action in numerous ways. According to Azad, those who were so outraged by a Kashmiri's going abroad, at the same time 'travel on trains in which Muslims and lower caste individuals also sit; take English medicine which has ingredients proscribed by the Hindu religion [no elaboration]; have sexual relations with Muslim

[11]M. N. Sapru, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Feb. 1891).
[12]I. P. Kitchloo, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Dec. 1891).
[13]Kitchloo, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (June 1891).

women; take their meat from Muslim butchers; eat English sweets, pickles and lemonade; and drink alcohol.'[14]

The *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir* contained similar indictments written in traditional poetic form and several families still possess copied of poems their grandparents wrote expressing similar sentiments. One poem preserved today in Delhi was authored by T. N. Sapru 'Hijr' and similarly pointed to the hypocrisy of the orthodox. 'If you are so pure why don't you move to Varanasi' it asked of the Dharm Sabhites.[15]

Many interpreted the division and enmity as further evidence of the imminent demise of the community. Hirday Narain Kaul, a *vakil* of Kanpur and a self-portrayed 'activist in the social work of the community' wrote in June 1891, 'Only after the total destruction of the community will it awake and reform.'[16]

This produced a violent denial from the editor, who cited historical examples of self-improvement to buttress his faith that the community would eventually become more enlightened.[17] Agha, incidentally, tended toward a generational interpretation of the division; in response to one of Kitchloo's diatribes, Agha wrote encouragingly that 'all young people are with you', and used the terms 'young party' for the Bishen Sabhites and 'conservative party' and 'old people' for the Dharm Sabhites.

By 1894, there was a sign of burgeoning optimism among the supporters of education abroad. In July 1894, one 'A. P.' from Delhi noted with satisfaction that 'by opposing going to England, the Dharm Sabha has created more enthusiasm in the community for the trip.' A. P. concluded that since the desire to go abroad would only grow, there was no justification for the Dharm Sabha's continued existence and predicted that the two groups would not last much longer.[18] He had good reason to think so, but he was quite wrong.

The *Safir* also printed detailed information on how to arrange and finance a trip abroad.[19] The tone of the article was conservative, to support the reformers' claim 'that nobody in our community can prove that Pandit Bishen Narain did anything against

[14]Azad, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Aug. 1895).
[15]This 20-page Urdu *nazm* was shown the writer by B. N. Raina in Delhi.
[16]H. N. Kaul, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (June 1891).
[17]Agha, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (June 1891).
[18]A. P., *Safir-i-Kashmir* (July 1894).
[19]Ibid.

religion in England.' The article included a description of the facilities available for Indian students in England which enabled them 'to live as though they were in India.' Several organizations were administered by Englishmen who had formerly lived in India (and charged 10 pounds monthly for room and board). At least one society 'looks after the moral behaviour of the students and informs the parents accordingly,' the article stated.

Cost rather than principle appeared to be the main deterrent. The average income of the plains Pandits was estimated to be 50 to 100 rupees per month. According to the article in *Safir*, the cost of an English education was, however, considerably more. University expenses were about 300 pounds yearly for a total outlay of 1,000 pounds; those preparing for the bar or the civil service would have to come up with a bit less; 50 pounds for the former, 275 pounds for the latter, annually.[20]

The *Safir* also printed contributions from Bishen Narain Dar himself. Most of these urged educational reform as the fount of the survival and progress of the community. These were written from an objective, historical point of view. 'If everyone is blind, then the one-eyed man is king,' wrote the community's first and only barrister. 'When we were the only semi-educated community, we got jobs; we think that because a little English got us jobs, this generation need only know a little English, but as education is becoming widespread, the community advantage is gone.'[21]

Bishen Narain Dar brought his message to the community at periodic conventions, appealing to the past greatness and unity of the Kashmiris to overcome the present vacillation and discord.

The *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir* included several of the poetic compositions of the Pandit.[22] They were *nazms*, the form of traditional Urdu poetry that was adapted in the nineteenth and early twentieth century to convey social and political messages.

Dar's message was not what one might anticipate from the first barrister of Hindustan, however. In his English speeches Dar spoke critically of the 'domineering instincts' of the Brahmanical caste, yet he wrote at least one *nazm* celebrating the Pandit's ancestors in Kashmir 'who were determined to lose everything but to

[20]Ibid. [21]B. N. Dar, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (July 1891).
[22]*Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. I, pp. 21-71.

preserve the name Brahman.'[23] The poem commemorated the Pandits who were persecuted in the period after Zain-ul-abidin's death in Kashmir, and was thoroughly conservative in tone. 'For our religion, hundreds of us gave our lives...they could take everything from us except our faith.'

Another composition recalled the Kashmiris' migration, which Dar portrayed as an exile, for 'leaving Kashmir was for us like the soul leaving the body behind.'[24] Dar celebrated the unity the Pandits displayed under that past adversity, 'though there were few in number, they managed to succeed because they were unified. The rich helped the poor. All were committed to the community.'[25]

Bishen Narain intended to establish the contrast between past harmony and present strife within the community. His purpose thus was a progressive one. In an appearance at the Kashmiri *quami* conference in 1896, the barrister read a poem which, it was explained at the end, was a vision of what the Pandit hoped from his community. 'In Lucknow there is a meeting place where members of the community are gathered. The meeting includes all sorts of people; there are doctors, MAs, BAs, scientists, engineers, etc. Everybody there is discussing candidly and lucidly various issues. All the community elders are very farsighted and change with the times. They are always encouraging the young to progress and never place obstacles in their path. In the evening, medals are distributed. The Chairman then points to a portrait of Shiv Narain "Bahar," saying that Bahar had started the community journal and had cut the chains of the Kashmiris; "It is because of him that we are together in this meeting." Just at this moment [concluded Dar] I awoke and realized how different is reality from my dream.'[26]

This message itself was less striking than the manner in which Dar evoked the history of the community. The stress on persecution and flight, the emphasis on the particularly Hindu claims of the Kashmiris were not entirely incidental to the current pursuit of a 'lost' unity. In representing Kashmiri history in this fashion, Bishen Narain was contributing to a trend which came to characterize both the most reactionary and progressive of the Pandits, a

[23]Ibid., p. 24.
[24]Ibid., p. 25.
[25]*Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. I, pp. 28-9.
[26]Ibid., pp. 26-7.

trend which asserted, with increasing vehemence, the Hindu identity of the Kashmiris. Whether this assertion was used to justify reform or to deny it, its effect was to negate the traditional links of the Kashmiris in the plains; both with the cross-communal governmental service class and the Mughal court culture with its denigration of the salience of religion.

Although Bishen Narain advocated a programme of reform (female education, education abroad, the reduction of wasteful expenditure), even this defier of convention should not be understood as a radical iconoclast. Bishen Narain was essentially a conservative in that he, too, adopted a religious justification for his actions. In spite of his dismissal of *prashchit*, he did not repudiate the place of religion in social life; he wished to eliminate superstition, not religion, from the Kashmiri tradition. The so-called conservatives were faulted more for their hypocrisy and decadence than for their orthodoxy; in fact they tended to be more secular than those who opposed them. If they resisted the changes for which Bishen Narain stood, it was on material grounds; and if the reformers ultimately succeeded, it was in solidifying the religious connections of the Pandits rather than repudiating them.

In many ways, Bishen Narain's trip abroad was the least characteristic thing he ever did. His writing was marked by an insistence on gradual, continuous change; an insistence that was more strongly stated in his later years when the distance between generations became a problem for him. And the man Bishen Narain most admired, Dayanand Saraswati, was an explicitly religious reformer who worked within the indigenous tradition.

Dar's writing in English was somewhat different from that in Urdu. His way of thinking, his arguments, the concepts employed were all derived from the western intellectual tradition even when the author's purpose was to praise specifically Indian phenomena. Bishen Narain's analysis of the caste system self-admittedly followed European logic and accepted the European conclusion that 'Caste had its origin in ethnological, political, and professional differences.'[27]

In explaining caste to his audience at the Carlyle Society, Dar wished to demonstrate 'how caste stands in the way of European ideas, how caste is antagonistic to modern civilization, how caste represents order obtained at the cost of progress.[28]

[27]Dar, *Caste System*, p. 8.

[28]Ibid., p. 9.

In spite of his evident distaste for many facets of Hindu society, Bishen Narain was against its speedy abolition, believing 'an open crusade against caste can only end in disaster... nothing but gentle and quiet compromise extended over a long time will be found efficacious.'[29] Dar justified this gradualist approach by citing Herbert Spencer: 'The old must continue as long as the new is not ready.'[30]

As did many nineteenth-century social writers, Bishen Narain was fond of applying Darwinian concepts derived from a study of nature to the social order. In an essay on *Our Education* which appeared in 1896, Dar wrote, 'A knowledge of the conditions under which the struggle between organism and environment is carried out is the first concern a parent must impart to a child... yet the chief feature of our existing education is that it ignores the condition of individual and national existence and takes no account of new social and political circumstances.'[31] If Bishen Narain's Urdu readers were told the one-eyed (i.e. those with limited knowledge of English) were no longer kings (i.e. qualified for official service ) the Pandit's English audience was informed that 'life in each organism depends on the proper adjustment of internal changes and external circumstances.'[32]

Dar's insistence on the priority of an enlightened education became subordinated to an awareness of the consequences of that education; an awareness which contributed to the increasingly conservative turn of the Pandit's thought. In his later English writing, Dar referred constantly to the 'moral interregnum' of young Indians. 'The home influence is out of harmony with the school life. Boy's moral selves have been cut in two.' This the Pandit blamed upon English education. 'In India [as in Russia, added the cosmopolitan author] intellectual progress has outstripped moral progress. The bonds of religion and tradition have been too abruptly snapped... English education is the solvent of our religion and tradition.'[33]

The twofold consequence of this foreign education was that the educated were alienated both within themselves and from the majority of the Indian people (a concept which was itself a product of

[29]Ibid., p. 11.

[30]Dar, 'On Foreign Travel', and *Pt Bishen Narain Dar's Speeches and Writings* ed. H. L. Chatterji (Lucknow, 1921), pp. 158-9.

[31]Dar, 'On Education', *Speeches and Writings*, p. 2.

[32]Ibid., p. 12.

[33]Ibid.

western thought). 'The educated,' Dar lamented in an essay on foreign travel, 'cannot speak in a language which the people can understand . . . The educated fail to influence people because when reason fails, [they have] nothing to which they can appeal . . . The man who in the midst of a vernacular speech quotes Tulsi or recites an anecdote from the Ramayana produces a far deeper impression [than those who quote English sources].'[34]

The ideal of this scarcely revolutionary figure was Dayanand Saraswati, who the Pandit termed 'the most original Hindu of this age, the one great Indian reformer who owes nothing to Western culture.' The first Kashmiri to go to England admired Dayanand simply because he 'communicated reform and progress to those Indians *not* influenced by English education. If Hindus repudiate caste and idol worship, and if they take pride in their ancient faith without accepting the overgrowth, and if they advocate widow remarriage and female education and sea voyage, and if they are better organized for offensive and defensive purposes, it is due to Dayanand Saraswati.'[35]

Bishen Narain Dar's first writings constantly referred to his identity as a Kashmiri; he utilized the experiences of his community to illustrate issues and substantiate conclusions. Later his focus and his concern became both more and less communal as they shifted from Kashmiri to Hindu and Indian affairs. In his later years, Dar became increasingly disillusioned with the British, or at least with Anglo-Indian officialdom. This seemed at least partly an outgrowth of the Kashmiri Pandit's sensitivity to communal relations.

Following the cow-protection riots in Azamgarh in 1893, Dar wrote a pamphlet based on interviews with over 100 individuals in which he blamed the government for the deteriorating relations between Muslims and Hindus.[36] Although the work has been interpreted as a defense of the cow protection societies by a Congress moderate,[37] Dar stated that 'nobody can deny that the Hindus were the aggressive party . . . I have no particular liking for the

[34]Dar, 'Foreign Travels', pp. 177-8.

[35]Dar, 'The Decay of Genius in Modern India', *Speeches and Writings*, pp. 53-4.

[36]Bishen Narain Dar, *An Appeal to the English Public on Behalf of the Hindus of the Northwestern Provinces and Oudh* (Lucknow 1893).

[37]John McLane, *Indian Nationalism and the Early Congress* (Princeton 1977), p. 334.

[cow protection] sabhas myself as I think they do more harm than good in the long run,' he noted. Dar, like Ajudhia Nath Kunzru in his appearance before the Public Service Commission almost ten years before, thought relations between upper-class educated Muslims and Hindus, the class to which most Kashmiri Pandits of the Urdu-speaking service elite belonged, were still harmonious. 'It is my firm belief that the upper and educated classes of Hindus and Muhammadans had no hand in the matter and that the whole work was the work of illiterate masses.' The cow protection societies were described by Dar as 'very orthodox bodies and therefore their teachings and preachings are less tolerant of other creeds than those of the educated classes.' But, 'It is not Muhammadan intolerance, ignorance, fanaticism; nor Hindu prejudice, exclusiveness, caste and religion which are the cause of disunion between the two communities,' Dar continued. 'It is the disintegrating policy of the Government, nothing else.'[38]

Bishen Narain, as did numerous other Kashmiris, contrasted the policies of the Britishraj with those of the Mughals. Referring to the 'Muhammadans whose descendants conquered India, and who, in their turn cultivated learning and art and made toleration one of the principal features of their policy,' Dar wrote:

> At a time when religious spirit was much stronger than it is now, they tolerated the prejudices of the subject race. In days when the Hindus had more national spirit than they do now, the Muhammadan rulers won their allegiance by their wise, sympathetic and conciliatory policy. All this was done centuries ago and now we are told in all seriousness that the descendants of these Muhammadans, although living under a highly civilized Government have become so degenerated that unless the British Government keeps them in check, they would fly at the throat of their Hindu fellow subjects... They have lived with the Hindus for centuries, they have made India their home; they have become one of us, they are bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh... In days gone by, Hindus received equal and cordial treatment at the hands of the Muhammadans; are they such monsters of ingratitude that they would now turn against their former benefactors and wound their religious feelings? The natural feelings of both communities are beyond doubt those of friendliness and mutual accord but the British Government is, by its short-sighted and selfish policy, working a mischievous change in them.[39]

Like other first generation Kashmiri-Pandit participants in the

[38]Dar, *An Appeal*, Appendix, pp. 6-8, 21.
[39]Ibid., pp. 22-3.

Congress movement, Dar sought to portray the Congress as the agent of harmony between Muslims and Hindus. 'The insinuations of the *Pioneer* that the Congress has in any way increased religious animosities between Hindus and Mohammadans is a move on the part of the civilian clique to discredit the political movement of modern India in the eyes of the British public . . . It is the object of the National Congress to unite, not to divide the two races.'[49]

The seeds of the contents of this pamphlet can be found in a speech delivered by Dar at the 6th annual Congress meeting three years before. In addressing himself to the question of the reform of the legislative councils, Dar said, 'In recent years the religious disputes between Mohammadans and Hindus are, in the mind of every well-wisher of his country, a cause of shame and regret. For my part, I attribute them entirely to the policy which the Government, or at any rate, some of its component parts, have adopted towards this country.[41] Dar quoted from Sir John Strachey to make his point that internal divisions were in the interest of the British government.

The same speech surfaced in the *Appeal* written three years later;[42] however, by this time, Dar's bitterness with the British in India had grown, and the man who felt so at home with the British he had met at the Carlyle Society in London was no longer an ardent anglophile. Dar went far beyond indicting the individual officers whose 'indiscretion' led to the Azamgarh riots, in his critique of the government. 'It is a caste Government, living in perfect isolation from, and in blessed ignorance of the subject race . . . The people see the official but they do not know the man. There is no social intercourse between the rulers and the ruled; and the shortening of the distance between India and England by steam has beyond doubt widened the gulf of differences between the Indian and the Anglo-Indian community . . . The old generation of civilians has passed away and with it much of the attachment which the people felt for British rule.[43]

Bishen Narain thus came to personify the fashion in which progressive tendencies could have a communal twist and to symbolize

[40]Ibid., p. 13.
[41]*Report of the Sixth Annual Indian National Congress Held at Calcutta on the 26, 27, 29 and 30 December, 1890*, p. 38.
[42]Dar, *An Appeal*, p. 19.
[43]Ibid., p. 25.

the paradoxical turn of affairs that made those who were most anglicized admire the least anglicized and despise the British.

Several aspects of Dar's life were mysterious as well as ironic—for many years (shortly after the events of 1893) he withdrew from the limelight. 'You waged a seven years war for your country, you remained indifferent as if in doubt about what to do next . . . and have since kept an unhappy seven years silence,' an open letter to the Pandit which appeared from an 'Indian Nationalist' in the *Advocate* stated in 1903. 'Your obvious disinterestedness and public spirit are beyond question. You are not entitled to let them rust.'[44] Bishen Narain Dar emerged briefly from his retirement and was made president of the Calcutta Congress of 1911. Five years later he passed away, a victim of tuberculosis. He died in his ancestral home in Kashmiri Muhalla in Lucknow, the home he had to persuade his mother to let him enter when he returned from England almost thirty years before.[45]

[44] *The Indian People*, 6 November 1903. *The Indian People* reprinted the letter, along with a supporting statement, 'We agree and ask him to become an active, public man.'

[45] Interview with Brig. S. Dar, Delhi, August 1979 and *Bahar-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. 2, p. 751. Bishen Narain left no legitimate children. He is remembered by his family as a puritanical man of austere habits and non-European tastes. But others feel the enmity his trip abroad inspired was due at least partially to personal antagonisms; that he was immoral, had numerous affairs, and had he been of less questionable manners, the division would not have been so severe. Bishen Narain had only one brother, born the year after he returned from England. He went into the provincial education service, became a sub-deputy inspector, and married in Lucknow without difficulty.

CHAPTER XIII

# Punjab: Late Nineteenth Century

Trends in the Pandit community of the Punjab at the end of the nineteenth century can at least partially be explained by developments in the larger environment. The most significant social fact governing the Punjab was that it was here that communal populations were most closely balanced and communal politics most pronounced.

The tradition of a cross-communal elite was not rooted in the province as it was in north India. The Mughal court culture had not left the residue of secular, cross-cultural links in Lahore in the form of literary societies, such as the *Jalsa-i-Tahzib* or the *Rifah-i-am*, which brought both Hindu and Muslim Urdu-speakers together in Lucknow. Ranjit Singh had presided over a kingdom in which religious conflicts were muted, but he did not cultivate the ties nurtured by the Mughals. The Khalsa Darbar did not give rise to a class combining literate occupation with aristocratic grace.

The introduction of the Angrezi Raj saw the establishment of western style societies, particularly the Indian Association, but these secular organizations were outnumbered by the communal ones. At the onset of British rule, the communal divisions were deeper at the upper levels of Punjabi society than in the North-western Provinces and Avadh. Under the British, they deepened further. The religious neutrality the British looked for in the products of their educational system, they sought in vain in the province. 'A striking characteristic of newly educated Punjabis,' wrote N. Gerald Barrier of the last quarter of the nineteenth century, 'was their tendency to identify with a religious community rather than with the western educated class as a whole.'[1] The salience of religious identity was in part the product of the equivalent size of

[1]N. Gerald Barrier, *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 3 (May 1968), p. 528

Hindu and Muslim communities. Neither could accept the dominion of the other; they were too closely balanced.

Of the Punjabi Hindus, Kenneth Jones noted:

> They had no poitical heritage. They had not ruled in the Punjab since the thirteenth century and could only turn to their religious and cultural heritage for communal identity and revitalization. Provincially in a minority, they were members of the majority community in South Asia. Both Hindus and Muslims possessed majority and minority status depending on how they were viewed. Muslims were a majority in the Punjab, a minority in South Asia. Hindus were a minority in the Punjab, a majority in South Asia. Majority and minority status then, were not determined by statistics but by perception, and perception was more often than not shaped by underlying fears. For all three communities (including the Sikhs), the arrival of the British meant defeat and new threats to security. The threat was not equal. Punjabi Hindus lost the least, adapted the quickest, and became the most successful within this new and strange world of the British Raj.[2]

The extent to which communal identity was pre-eminent was made clear by a comparison of the testimony of provincial witnesses who appeared before the Public Service Commission in the Punjab and the northwestern provinces. In the latter, witnesses tended to minimize the importance of religion, it was class distinction that mattered. Those testifying invariably urged the Commission to exclude the low-born from public service, while professing indifference to sectarian affiliations. Moreover, witnesses may have differed on the relative merits of nomination and examination, but their differences were not determined by their religion so much as their social background and individual experiences.

This was not the case in the Punjab, where opinions conformed to religious affiliation, and many indicated concern at the thought of an administration staffed by those of different religions. From the beginning, leadership was on a communal basis. Distinctions may have existed on the degree to which an individual espoused a more or less militant attitude; none spoke for both communities.

The Punjab Government was the first to take note of these religious animosities. In its statement to the Commission, the government reviewed the recent history of relations between Hindus and Muslims; it was a history of boycotts, clashes and riots put down only after the army stepped in. Multan exploded in 1881 over the

[2]Kenneth W. Jones, *Arya Dharm, Hindu Consciousness in 19th Century Punjab* (New Delhi, Manohar Book Service, 1976), pp. 21-2.

slaughter of beef. Lahore, Karnal, Ambala, Ludhiana, Hoshiarpur and Jullunder were all the scenes of disturbances arising out of the synchronous celebration of Muharram and Dasehra between 1883 and 1885. The Government took note of the communalization of local administration as members of municipal committees refused to serve under chairmen of opposing religions, or uphold public rights when these were violated by a co-religionist. The Government concluded by dismally remarking that 'elements of discord on this account are never absent in the Punjab.'[3]

In his appearance before the Commission, W. Macworth Young of the I. C. S noted the increasing frequency of religious clashes which he attributed to the revitalization of Punjabi Hindus. 'One thing which has very much contributed to the revival of religious feeling has been the gradual uplifting of the heads of the Hindus. The Hindus have of late come to realize they hold an equal position with Mohamadans and they have come to assert their rights . . . Then I think the general tendencies of our rule have been to remove many of the obstacles to a free expression of opinion which formerly existed and that our Local Self Government system and other measures such as the introduction of competition have unavoidably been the means of eliciting a very much stronger self assertion in the different races.'[4]

Like most Muslim witnesses, Munshi Muharram Ali was opposed to competition simply because it favoured the Hindus. This was the case in the Upper Provinces as well, but there, unanimity in favour of this method of recruitment by the Hindus was not displayed. Said the Munshi, 'Now in consequence of the increased strength acquired by them through the education they received, [the Hindus] directly oppose the Mohammadans and indirectly use cow killing as a pretext for opposing government. Open competition would not only increase their power by giving them more appointments but the Muhammadan element will become still more reduced. Therefore there should be no competitive examination . . . To say that India is one nation or that Hindus and Muslims agree is a great mistake. I regard it as a special interposition of Providence that a race from beyond the seas, having no connection

[3]Proceedings of the *Public Service Commission*, Evidence from the Punjab, Statement of the Punjab Government, p. 38.

[4]Ibid., p. 210.

with either of these sects, should have come here to govern . . . and this is the race which alone is fitted for executive office.'[5]

It was only witnesses from Delhi who expressed less communal sentiments in a pattern more reminiscent of north India than the Punjab. Lala Hakumat Rai, the representative of the Indarprast Society of Delhi, 'whose object is the promotion of trade and loyalty and the discussion of all subjects of public and local interest' (and of which the members were all Hindus), interpreted recent riots in class, rather than religious terms. When asked about the recent disturbances in Delhi, the Lala stoutly denied they were religious; 'I don't consider that they were religious; whenever a large crowd collects it gives opportunities to "badmashes". When then asked whether Hindus were on one side the Muslims on the other Hakumat Rai replied, 'Not generally; it was only the lowest classes of badmashes—the roughs who were hungry . . . There were cases in which Muhammadans were beaten by Muhammadans and Hindus by Hindus.'[6] Similarly, Chaudhri Rajnath Singh, president of the local board of Delhi wished to see restrictions in recruitment, not on a communal, but a class basis.[7]

The same pattern characterized the hearings of the Educational Commission in its appearance in the Punjab four years earlier. The Commission became the battleground for those who wished to destabilize the language situation, advocating that Urdu, which had replaced Persian as the court language in 1855, yield to Hindi in the Devanagri script. This campaign, as Kenneth Jones notes, had the support of all segments of the Hindu community.[8] Although 'the dialect question is the burning issue of the day,' according to testimony, it was only the representative of the Delhi Literary Society who had no views on the matter and told the Commission, 'there was no concurring opinion among ourselves.'[9] But the majority of witnesses took clear sides on the issue, sides determined by religion.

The manner in which communal identification corresponded to opinion on political matters was of especial concern in that it arose

[5]Ibid., p. 204. [6]Ibid., p. 246.
[7]Ibid., p. 74. [8]Jones, *Arya Dharm*, p. 64.
[9]*Education Commission* (Hunter Commission) 1882, Punjab Provincial Committee (Calcutta, 1884), p. 523.

at a time when Pubjabi society was undergoing change, but not necessarily constriction. There were uncertainties, but there were also opportunities. The fact that competition was so intense when opportunities were increasing did not bode well for a future moment when they would cease to do so. Possibly, it was the pace of change that was threatening; the Punjab was being transformed more rapidly than other parts of British India, in part because the British were more confident of their hold over the province.

That there was opportunity was evident. Government College in Lahore was founded in 1864. In the early years, its history was marked by small numbers of students who left without completing courses because of the rich opportunities available after only a short period of study. In 1867-8 for example, 21 students left the college. Of these, 16 found employment with salaries ranging from 20 to 150 rupees, with an average income of 60 rupees a month. (This was the year the Kashmiri Pandit, Ram Narain, left the college to join the Department of Public Instruction at a salary of 80 rupees monthly.) Reviewing the careers of those who had left in previous years, the Director noted that most found employment as clerks, with salaries ranging from 200 rupees monthly (Pandit Chandar Bal as a clerk in the Peshawar Court) to 45 rupees.[10] The following year, among the school-leavers was Pandit Pran Nath Thusso, who eventually became the first Native Examiner of Accounts. Pran Nath secured his first job in the Department of Public Works at a salary of 160 rupees monthly.[11] In Delhi, where the temptation of employment was said to be less, out of 26 students enrolled, 10 departed, among them Pandit Girdhari Lal who was, it was recorded, preparing for the pleadership exam.[12] Two years later, the average dropout at Lahore was earning 80 rupees a month.[13] One of these ten was Pandit Ganga Ram Kaul who went on to become Accountant-General and gave jobs to numerous kinsmen. Ganga Ram's first appointment was as sub-assistant inspector in the Post Office, for which he was paid a monthly stipend of 90 rupees.[14]

In 1872, the Director of Public Instruction, John Graham Cordery, noted that 'the supply of educated [natives] is not

[10]*Reports on Popular Education in the Punjab and Dependencies* (*RPE*) 1867-1868, W.R. Holyrod, Dept. of Public Instruction (Lahore, 1868), p. 42.
[11]Ibid., Report of the Principal. [12]*RPE*, 1867-1868.
[13]*RPE*, 1868-9, p. 69. [14]*RPE* 1869-70, Appendix xxxix.

greater than the demand at present in the Punjab'. The number of students said to be studying English was almost unbelievably small, 56 in Delhi, and the same in Lahore.[15] Of the 53 students who had matriculated prior to 1872 and left, two-thirds had obtained employment at salaries ranging from 15 to 160 rupees and of those who were not employed, many were studying for the pleadership exam.[16] The rewards of higher education were evident, those 348 vernacular students to which the report referred were earning an average 8 rupees monthly.[17]

In the 1880s, those who left the colleges of the province followed more diversified occupational choices. Of the 62 students who dropped out of Government College in 1877-8 (the year Delhi College closed), 19 took jobs and 7 went on to take law classes. But 3 went on to study at the technical institute in Roorkee and 4 more were preparing for admission there. Two students were serving as apprentices and 2 more were proceeding to medical school. Several of the others were studying privately, the occupation of 12 was unknown, and only 8 were engaged as *mukhtars*.[18] Several years later, the variety of possible callings was even more striking. Of the 46 students who left in 1880-1, 4 joined the railways and several others were hired by the forest department. But if the jobs offered were more varied, the pay was less, 12 students were recorded as being employed at salaries ranging from 20 rupees to 90 rupees, but the average monthly income was only 38 rupees.[19] Nine students enrolled in the Central Training College which was organized that same year to train teachers; a further indication that prospects were becoming less lucrative.[20]

Law as a calling also developed as a great expanding balloon of opportunity which abruptly burst. The first law classes were organized in 1870 and the first students were sent up for exams in 1874. The 1868 Census enumerated only 92 pleaders in the province, of which 52 were in Delhi and 35 in Lahore. In 1891-2, there were 85 students enrolled in the law classes. Five years later there were 433 students on the rolls, and the director was remarking on the 'remarkable rush in the direction of law. Expenses are more than covered by the fees.' Only five more years had passed however before a drastic decline was noted. In 1901-2 only 159 students

[15]Ibid., 1872, p 42. [16]Ibid., 1872-3, p. 4.
[17]Ibid., p. 44. [18]Ibid., 1878-9, pp. 82-3. [19]Ibid.
[20]*Punjab Census*, 1868, p. 27.

were registered at the law classes, and the 'diminishing attraction of the profession' was duly recorded.[21]

The educational lag of the Punjab in the third quarter of the nineteenth century was cited by the Hunter Commission. In the 20 years from 1861 to 1881, only 52 individuals had received an arts degree, while the figure for the most recent year in the North-west provinces was 29. In 1882 a total of only 75 Punjabis had passed the entrance exam, 14 had passed the First Arts and precisely one individual received a Bachelor's degree.[22] In 1886, the figures had grown to 147, 72 and 115 respectively.[23]

Those who were sent to the Delhi College and Government College in Lahore were those who were traditionally literate, a pattern which characterized the Upper Provinces as much as the Punjab, although in each region the social groups differed. 'The response to the opportunities created under the British followed existing occupational patterns of the province,' wrote Kenneth Jones.[24]

In his appearance before the Public Service Commission, W.R. Holyrod, Director of Public Instruction in the Punjab for twenty years, noted that university graduates were generally drawn from the middle class and occasionally the upper class.[25] He produced a list to support this claim which indicated the professions followed by the fathers of the 52 degree holders of the University. The majority were from the ranks of of the Hindu middle classes. Of the 52, 14 were Khatris, the commercial and clerical Punjabi Hindus, while 9 others were described as either banya or Arora. There were 3 Kashmiri Pandits; Narendra Nath who took a bachelor's degree in 1885 and master's the following year, Hari Kishen Kaul, and Parduman Kishen Kaul, both of whom received bachelor's degrees in 1886. All three were the sons of high ranking government servants; Narendra Nath's father, Ajodhia Prasad, was an honorary assistant commissioner and the fathers of the two others were both extra assistant commissioners. The Kashmiris boasted the most respectable calling of the parents on this list. There was one Khatri *tehsildar*, one Arora *naib-tehsildar*, one Sikh

[21]Ibid., 1868, p. 27; *RPE,* 1896-7, p. 55; Ibid., 1901-2, p. 80.
[22]*RPE*, Punjab, p. 123.
[23]*Public Service Commission*, Punjab, p. 70.
[24]Jones, *Arya Dharm*, p. 59.
[25]*Public Service Commission*, Punjab, pp. 106-7.

*jagirdar* and one Chaudhuri zamindar. The majority of parents were lower ranking shopkeepers and servants.

Education was sought by the wealthy but not the very wealthy. According to figures published in the Education Commission report, of the 103 students at the college in 1881, only 6 parents had monthly incomes of over 300 rupees.[26] Forty-eight parents earned between 20 and 50 rupees monthly, 19 between 50 and 100 rupees (the income of the average Kashmiri, according to Shamim)[27], and 16 between 100 and 300 rupees. That same year 39 of the 103 students' fathers were government servants, with an additional 15 in private service. Commerce claimed 21 parents, and zamindari 11. The cost of a B.A. was estimated by Holyrod at 400 rupees, but he added, the bulk of the B.A.s received government scholarships.[28]

The Kashmiris were among the first to take to English education, and they took to it, in fact, relatively faster than they did elsewhere in north India. In 1893, for example, there were only 2 Kashmiris who had passed the intermediate exam, according to Agha.[29] While the figure for the Punjab is not known, the fact that one of the only 2 master's degree holders and 2 of the 15 bachelor's degree holders in the Punjab in 1886 were Kashmiris testifies to the alacrity with which the Kashmiris of the Punjab responded to the new educational opportunities.

In north India in 1886 there were 108 deputy collectors and extra assistant commissioners and 215 *tehsildars*. In the Punjab there were 82 extra assistant commissioners and 123 *tehsildars*.The discrepancy was less wide in the judicial service: the Northwest Provinces and Avadh employed 94 *munsifs* while in the Punjab there were 83.[30] The Punjabi administration was regarded by Indians as staffed by favourites and the traditional *amlas*, rather than by the meritorious and newly educated.

The *Notes on the Administration of Justice* in the Punjab, written by an anonymous 'Punjabi Pleader' in 1890 voices the typical complaint that 'many extra assistant commissioners belong to the amla

[26] *Hunter Commission* (1884), Punjab, p. 53.
[27] Shamim, *Tarikh-i-Panditon-Kashmir*, p. 140.
[28] *Hunter Commission*, Punjab, p. 108.
[29] A. K. Agha, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (June 1894).
[30] *Public Service Commission*, Punjab, p. 27.

class and are totally incapable of performing judicial functions.'[31] The author noted that the extra assistant commissionerships were the highest rank to which a native could aspire, and observed plaintively that that 'a major portion of these posts are bestowed on their favourites by the officers.' [32]

As they had in north India,the British inherited a system of government in the Punjab that was highly unsystematized. The earliest English descriptions of the administration of the province insisted on its primitive, undeveloped structure. 'Officials live by the perquisites of their appointments . . . The arrangements of the exchequer and for auditing accounts is notoriously defective.' [33]

The British were determined to preside over a gentle transition and a simple administration—so simple, in fact that 'the introduction of pleaders is to be discouraged.' They wished the judicial structure to be so clear that it would 'never be imperative for a suitor to employ an agent.' [34] By 1853, the transition was considered 'well nigh complete. The feudal nobility of Ranjit Singh tend toward inevitable decay, the gaudy retinues have disappeared, city residents are less gay, but the British government has done all it consistently could to mitigate the reverses and render the decay gradual.'[35]

Although the English had 'by the time of annexation summoned a number of staff of civil officers from the Northwest and placed them at the Board [of Administration] disposal,'[36] they were also eager to find 'such natives as might have filled offices of trust under the Darbar' for their service.[37] The administration of the Punjab was inaugurated in a spirit of conciliation far different from the mood of the imperial government in the earliest years after the annexation of Avadh. 'When [the nobility] was judged to possess hereditary claims, a fair share of landed fiefs was guaranteed them and their posterity in perpetuity.'[38] As has been indicated previously, the Kashmiris who had risen under the Khalsa Darbar,

[31] *Notes on the Administration of Justice in the Punjab*, anonymous 'Punjab Pleader' (Lahore, 1891) , p. 7.

[32] Ibid., p.47.

[33] Report on the *Administration of the Punjab* 1849-1850. Selections from the Records of the Government of India (Calcutta, 1853) , p. 11.

[34] Ibid.,p. 76.

[35] *Punjab Annual Administration Report* 1851–2 and 1852–3, p. 212.

[36] Ibid., p. 29. [37] Ibid., p. 31. [38] Ibid., p. 212.

emerged from the British takeover with their lives and their fortunes relatively intact.

From the onset, then, the Kashmiris found a place in the Angrezi Raj. Many of the Pandits who first found positions in the new Punjabi government were newly introduced products of the British educational system and allies of the English administration. Successive generations shared a western education, but it was the first generation that was most committed to western ideals. The British were not able to mould the next generation as totally to their values.

One early westernized figure was Pandit, later Diwan, Man Phul. Man Phul was originally a resident of Delhi. Like his fellow Kashmiri, Moti Lal Katju, Man Phul began his career in a manner symbolic of his larger role in life, as a translator.[39] By 1851, he had been appointed translator to the Board of Administration which had just been organized to govern the Punjab, and had produced the *Qanun-i-Diwani*, an Urdu translation of the rules issued by the British authorities for the administration of civil justice in their newly acquired province.[40] The following year, Man Phul was mentioned as one of thirty extra assistant commissioners in the Punjab.[41] Throughout these years he continued to translate various administrative guides and rulebooks, all of which were published in Lahore.[42] He was sent to Rajasthan following the 1857 Uprising to help in the pacification of that region, but by the early 1860s he had returned to Lahore.[43]

In 1865, Man Phul was among those who inaugurated the *Anjuman i Punjab*. The society was one of the few in the Punjab (relative to U.P.) dedicated to the pursuit of non-communal concerns. It was 'open to all respectable and educated persons upon election and the payment of small subscription fee,'[44] and was both an expression of and a means of furthering the commitment of

[39]de Tassy, *Histoire*, Vol. 2, p. 276.
[40]*Notes on the Native Press*, 1851, Selections from the Records of Government, NWP (Agra, 1855) p. 285.
[41]de Tassy, *Histoire*, Vol. 2, p. 276.
[42]de Tassy, *La Langue*, p. 293.
[43]Interview with Gopi Nath Handoo, Delhi, August 1979.
[44]*Administrative Report for the Punjab 1882* p. 282–3.

influential Punjabi society to Angrezi Raj. The goals of the *Anjuman* were to 'popularize the benefits of government measures, to associate the learned and intellectual classes with government, to develop the feeling of loyalty, to promote commerce and industry, to advance education to the masses through the vernacular, and finally to discuss social, political and literary questions [which was done a lot] and to revive ancient learning [which was not]. The joint patrons of the society were the most prestigious possible: the Prince of Wales and the Lieutenant-Governor.[44] Man Phul took an active role in the activities of the association, at its first meeting he 'expressed the views of the intellectual class regarding their interest in the amelioration of the condition of the masses', and the next year submitted a long article opposing polygamy.[45]

In 1867, the British awarded the Pandit 5000 rupees and bestowed a monthly allowance of 2000 rupees upon him as well as a *zamindari* of five villages in recognition of his services. 'Good work has its reward,' the *Koh-i-noor* commented.

That same year, Man Phul's son Chandar Bal left the Lahore College to take an appointment as clerk in the court at Peshawar on a salary of 200 rupees per month.[46] The following year, the Pandit's second son, Suraj Bal, 'formerly of zila school Lahore, then of Delhi and now of Lahore College' was awarded a scholarship of 100 pounds per annum to study in England.[47]

Chandar Bal followed in his father's footsteps; he soon was made officiating extra assistant commissioner, and was by 1876 extra assistant commissioner. In 1877, Suraj Bal, equipped with an Oxford degree and the title Barrister-at-Law, enrolled in the Chief Court.[48] In 1879, Suraj Bal was one of three natives nominated by the provincial government to the Civil Service. By this time, Man Phul was Mir Munshi of the Punjab Secretariat, a member of the Civil Service and a *diwan*. Of Suraj Bal, Lepel Griffin wrote, 'He represents the highest English education which any Punjabi has received. His education and manner of life has emancipated him from native prejudices.'[49]

[45]de Tassy, *La Langue*, p. 293, 339.

[46]*RPE*, 1867–89 Appendix vi.

[47]Ibid. , 1868–9, p. 56.

[48]*Civil List for the Punjab*, 1876-1877.

[49]*Collected Papers Regarding the Appointment of Natives of India to Offices Reserved for Covenanted Civil Servants* (Calcutta,1879), Minute 369, p. 146, Lepel Griffin Sec., Punjab Govt., 30 Sept.

Pandit Man Phul could well be pleased with the accomplishments of his family. Yet a few years later, Sardar Gurdial Singh, then an Assistant Commissioner, told the Public Service Commission that he had 'intended to go up for the [competitive exam in England] civil service from the Punjab but my father withheld permission after seeing the disappointment caused to the late Pandit Man Phul by the conduct of his son'.[50] The conduct to which the witness was referring was Suraj Bal's marriage by a Bombay magistrate to an Englishwoman.

In his appearance before the Commission, Chandar Bal attempted to minimize the enormity of his brother's actions. He informed the commission that the proscription on overseas travel 'has no force among the enlightened' and denied that Suraj Bal was made outcaste by the Kashmiris: 'He lives apart by choice. I would have received him back but the community would have compelled him to perform certain purification ceremonies, but having performed these ceremonies there would have been no distinction between him and me'.[51]

The incident generated enough publicity for the Commission to ask about it in the course of their inquiries regarding the consequences of voyage to England, although not all the respondents were familiar with it. T.W.Smyth, then officiating judge at the Chief Court, was asked, 'Would a Kashmiri Brahman have no objection to going to England?' He replied,'I do not know if any Kashmiri Brahman holds appointment in this province.I should say such a person would go to England readily.'[52] R.T. Burney, however, knew exactly what the Commission was talking about when they referred to the case of a man 'who went home [i.e. to England] and married an English wife'. He responded, 'I never met the man. I should not think he had lost in position. He is now in a high position in Kashmir.'[53](Suraj Bal was then Chief Justice in Jammu.)

What is most striking about this episode was that the community suppressed it completely. It is hard to say what role it may have played in the Kashmiri response to Bishen Narain Dar because the journals never mentioned it. Today, it is Pandit Man Phul who is recalled, rather than his son. Man Phul was one of the magnets of the Kashmiri community in Lahore, a Pandit who never achieved

[50] *Public Service Commission*, Punjab, p. 82.
[51] Ibid., p. 176 [52] Ibid., p. 23. [53] Ibid., p. 58.

the visible pre-eminence of a *rais* such as Narendra Nath or Daya Kishen but who was instrumental in assisting numerous of his fellows to obtain administrative employment.[54] The Punjabi community seems to have been especially fortunate in the number of such pivotal figures in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Pandit Man Phul and later Jiwan Lal Kaul, Secretary of the Railway Board, and Ganga Ram Kaul, Accountant-General, while generally obscure, are recalled with gratitude by the community for their securing 'thousands' of posts for the Kashmiris.[55]

The Handoo family, for example, regards Man Phul as its informal guardian. Pran Kishen Handoo (grandson of the first Handoo to leave Kashmir) was brought to the Punjab by Man Phul, probably through his uncle Jawal Nath who was in Alwar when Man Phul was there as guardian to the young maharaja in 1876.[56]

Man Phul was a product of British training and British values, and was lavishly rewarded for his faithful reflection of these values. He died before the implications of the path he had chosen became manifest; to his contemporaries, however, he must have come more to symbolize the dangers than the rewards of a major departure from tradition. The next generation, both of Kashmiris and Punjabis, were not willing to break as decisively from their past as had Man Phul's generation.

[54]Interview with Gopi Nath Handoo, Delhi, August 1979.
[55]Interviews with R.N. Zutshi, M.K. Kaul and P.N. Pandit.
[56]G.N. Handoo interview, Delhi, August 1979.

CHAPTER XIV

# Reform in the Punjab

The Lahori Pandits, and those in the Punjab generally, responded in more dispassionate fashion to the Bishen Sabha/Dharm Sabha controversy than did those in Avadh. This was not merely a function of distance but the historical tendency of the Kashmiris of the Punjab to be more pragmatic; less burdened by considerations of pedigree and orthodoxy.

Commentators on community customs always noted that in the Punjab they tended to be simpler and less expensive than in north India; although several analysts worried that increased contact between the Pandits of Uttar Pradesh and the Punjab would result in Punjabi imitation of the extravagant habits of the Northerners. In his *Tarikh-i-Panditon-i-Kashmir*, Shiv Narain Raina 'Shamim' noted: 'The Punjabi Pandits' way of life is simpler compared to that of Delhi and Lucknow Pandits. When the Delhi and Lucknowi Kashmiri Pandits started coming to the Punjab, they looked disdainfully upon the Punjabi Pandits [who] started to imitate the Pandits of Lucknow and Delhi.'[1]

Similarly, in a letter to the *Murasla-i-Kashmir* praising the community's first tentative steps toward the reduction of expenses involved in marriages, Badri Nath Razdan cited Lucknow as the worst offender. Delhi was considered better, while Lahore was said to have the most moderate outlay.[2] Brij Mohan Dattatreya also praised Kashmiris of the Punjab, maintaining that they were less superstitious and closer to their origins in Kashmir.[3]

The Kashmiri Pandits of the Punjab were more secure than their fellows in U. P. Their Hindu-ness was never questioned in the less orthodox Punjab to the degree it was in the heart of Aryavarta,

[1]S. N. Raina Shamim, *Tarikh-i-Panditon-i-Kashmir* (Jullunder, 1894), p. 52.
[2]B. N. Razdan, *Murasla-i-Kashmir* (Feb.1873).
[3]B.M. Dattatreya, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Autumn, 1891).

especially since the Hindus constituted a minority of the population of the Punjab. If the Kashmiri was made to feel defensive about his religion, it was as a Hindu, not as a Kashmiri Brahman.

Economically, the Pandits of the Punjab were a more diversified group than those in Hindusthan. They depended less on government service and were more integrated into the modern sector of the regional economy. The middle class majority of the Pandits had a stronger base than in the Northwestern Provinces.

Letters to editors of the various community journals from Kashmiris residing in the Punjab reveal a varied occupational profile. In addition to the extra assistant commissioners and judicial commissioners, there were many accountants, several engineers, and numerous employees of the rapidly expanding Public Works Department. Those in the educational service specialized in scientific as much as liberal subjects. Many more Kashmiris in the Punjab than elsewhere were involved-in commercial undertakings. There was more opportunity in the growing economy of British Punjab and the Pandits, less burdened by the inhibitions of tradition, were able to take advantage of these opportunities.

There was also greater unity within the ranks of the Punjabi community, a result of a more dedicated leadership than in the community in Avadh. Control was in the hands of those Pandits who had first risen in the heyday of the Lahore Darbar and the years immediately following annexation by the British. The leaders of the Punjabi community were more moderate in regard to internal affairs than those in Lucknow, and more willing to consider the adaptations required for success in a world dominated by the English. The affairs of the Lahori Pandits were not handled in a democratic fashion but the paternalism of the elders was more enlightened.

Control was more effective because leadership in the Punjab strengthened patronage links. These links were made a source of power and influence within the city. The Lucknowi Pandits, on the other hand, allowed these links to dissolve.

'East of the Sutlej River,' wrote Amar Nath Madan 'Sahir' to the *Safir* in February of 1892, 'the community lies divided and inactive. It is only west of the Sutlej, in the Punjab, that the community united.'[4]

[4]A. N. Madan 'Sahir', *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Feb.1892)

In 1891, Maharaj Kishen Ghumkhuar announced in the pages of the community journal the formation of a Kashmir National Association.[5] The title was instructive. The Pandits of Lahore, newly confident and assertive, meant to challenge the pre-eminent position of the Pandits of Lucknow. Ghumkhuar, as secretary of the organization, enclosed rules for aspiring members (including a one-rupee admission fee and a four-anna monthly charge). The purpose of the new group was to promote unity, develop the intellectual, moral, and industrial resources of the community, distribute charity to orphans and widows and promote 'those reforms which do not contravene our religion.'[6]

The association planned to meet once weekly at the home of Diwan Narendra Nath Raina. Raina was the son of Ajodhia Prasad, and was one of the first Pandits to take a master's degree. He later was to rise to an officiating commissionership in the provincial service. Raina's almost automatic leadership of the community was formalized by his election to the chairmanship of the association. Colonel Pran Nath, postmaster of Peshawar, served immediately under the Diwan. The Vice-president was Manohar Nath Zutshi, an accountant in the Public Works Department, while the office of financial secretary was filled by Har Prasad Dar, an officer in the railway administration. As a bureaucracy, the association had mastered all the correct forms and titles.

The first month thirty-eight Kashmiris joined the association.[7] Two months later, another communique was published in the *Safir-i-Kashmir* from secretary Ghumkhaur announcing the success of the fledgling organization. Members were said to be arriving from cities as far distant as Jammu to participate in the proceedings, and an educational fund was established.[8]

Agha thought the association was overly ambitious. In a letter published as an introduction to Ghumkhaur's article, the editor warned of the overriding necessity for unity. 'Unless all agree, nothing can be done.' He furthermore suggested that local groups be established all over north India before any national gathering be scheduled. Agha approved of the need of reform, he told Ghumkhuar, but thought the timing wrong.[9]

[5]M. K. Ghumkhuar, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Jan.1891).
[6]Ibid.
[7]Ibid.
[8]Ibid.(March 1891).
[9]A. K. Agha, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (March 1891).

Agha's reservations were unnecessarily cautious. In their December meeting the Pandits of Lahore were able to pass several resolutions unanimously. Members pledged to reduce the expenses associated with *mundan* (the haircutting ceremony), *janeu* (the sacred thread investiture) and marriage, and to limit the number of invitations to each ceremony. The determination behind these resolutions was evidenced by another resolution, that attendance would be open only to those who abided by these injunctions.[10]

All the notables of the community seem to have assembled on the platform constructed at the home of Narendra Nath under the golden-lettered 'om'. Diwan Amar Nath Madan, grandson of Raja Dina Nath, contributed 400 rupees to the boarding-house fund, as did Pran Nath, grandson of Colonel Badri Nath.[11] But the gathering was not merely the institutionalized expression of the leadership. Low-level clerks and teachers attended as well. To the more humble Kashmiris, community ties gave entree into the most impressive native residences in the city. Community ties were both a source of pride and potential mobility. Community identity remained meaningful both in sentimental and material ways.

Six months later, the Association was well on its way to realizing its ambition of becoming the national organization of tne Pandits. In August 1892, Brij Mohan Dattatreya, a Delhi Pandit active in community affairs, a Bishen Sabhite who was well looked upon by the Dharm Sabhites, issued an invitation to the Pandits of north India to join the Lahore group.[12] Dattatreya noted that Sham Narain Masseldon, 'the Gladstone of our community' and a leader of the Lucknow Pandits, had joined the Lahore association as had several others, including Bishen Narain Dar.

Those Pandits who sought to work only within the Lucknow Social Conference continually faced a lack of consensus, all the more frustrating when contrasted with the unanimity displayed in the Punjab—a point made by Maharaj Narain Shivpuri, then Deputy Collector of Banares, in March 1894. While the Lucknowi Pandits decided to postpone even collecting money for an educational fund, the Punjabis were engrossed in making plans to lay the foundations of a boarding house in Lahore.[13] The rationality of the

[10]M. K. Ghumkhuar, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Dec.1891).
[11]Ibid.
[12]B. M. Dattatreya, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Aug. 1892).
[13]M. N. Shivpuri, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (March 1892).

Lahore Pandits seemed to be further confirmed by the lack of controversy when Prithvi Nath Razdan set out from Lahore to pursue his studies in England. 'The community did not oppose it and in fact encouraged it.'[14]

The determination of the Lahore Pandits to control internal factionalism was further attested in late 1892 when Maharaj Narain Chaudhari, Deputy Collector of Bijnor (in the U.P.) arranged for his son to marry a panditani of Lahore, the daughter of Pandit Sham Narain. The Deputy Collector was appalled to discover that in Lahore Dharm Sabhites ate with Bishen Sabhites, and tried to amend this state of affairs. But the Pandits of Lahore, determined to contain the dispute, banned him from communal activities in the city and boycotted the visitor instead.[15] The Kashmiri cooks of Lahore then refused to cook for the visiting group. Maharaj Narain was provided with uncooked food which his own cook was forced to prepare. A telegram was dispatched from the Kashmiris in Amritsar declaring they supported their neighbours and demanding to know why the Deputy Collector had to bring up the subject at all.[16]

In June 1894, the Kashmir National Association took its most innovative step by declaring its intention to employ Indian, rather than Kashmiri, cooks, mainly because Kashmiri students would not then need their own boarding house in order to have food prepared by Kashmiris.[17] No sooner was this resolution passed than Shiv Narain Raina 'Shamim' placed an advertisement in the *Safir* offering to pay the expenses of any Pandit student in a government boarding house 'if he is moral and will eat food cooked by an Indian Brahmin with other Hindu students.'[18] Following these actions, the Kashmiri cooks in the reformers' employ all resigned. But the momentum for change remained unaffected.

At the onset, then, the Kashmiris of Lahore were evidently far more progressive than those of Avadh. Unable to achieve a consensus on the excommunication of Bishen Narain Dar, the community in north India fissioned into what almost became separate subcastes. The Pandits of the Punjab, however, managed to keep

[14]I. K. Kaul, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (March 1891).
[15]*Safir-i-Kashmir* (Nov.-Dec. 1892), anon.
[16]A. P., *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Nov.-Dec. 1892).
[17]M. K. Ghumkhaur, *Safir-i-Kashmir* (June 1894).
[18]Ibid. (July 1894).

the controversy from creating a decisive rift in the community and went about facilitating change in unified fashion.

One of the most clear-eyed of the Kashmiri Pandits of the Punjab was the individual who inserted the advertisement in the *Safir*, Shiv Narain Raina 'Shamim' of Jullunder. 'Shamim' was a prolific writer. He sent numerous articles to the community journals, wrote short stories dramatizing the need for reform within the community, and published essays and novels directed at the larger Hindu community. 'Shamim' represented the possibility of enlightened change which was, at the end of the nineteenth century, still a real possibility.

Shiv Narain was the descendant of one of the older Kashmiri families in the plains.[19] His forefathers had left Kashmir at the beginning of the eighteenth century first for Delhi and then Jaipur. Shiv Narain's great-grandfather, Rai Daya Nidhan, became *mashir-i-mal* or advisor to the treasury department in Jaipur and amassed wealth and property which was confiscated when he fell out of favour.

Daya Nidhan's son, Jagat Narain, went to Agra and then to Lahore, where he married his son, Inder Narain, to the daughter of Gulab Rai, *bakshi* to the Sikh military forces. In 1859, Shiv Narain was born at his maternal grandparents' home in Lahore. He was educated at the government college and was registered as a first grade pleader at the Chief Court in 1886.[20] According to the *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, he was named a full advocate by Arthur Reid, then Chief Justice, and was the first native *vakil* to be so honoured. Shortly thereafter he was recommended by Sir William Clark for a Rai Bahadurship.

Shamim was notable in the history of Kashmiri Pandits not because the community realized his hopes but because it confirmed his fears. He did not change the direction of the community, but he anticipated the turn taken by it. His writings in retrospect present a portrait of the Pandits on the path taken by the majority, that of revived Hinduism. Shamim saw Hinduism as part of the

[19]The following summary of Raina's life is taken from the *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. 2, p. 503.

[20]*Punjab Civil List*, Pleaders Admitted Under Act XVIII of 1879 as amended by Act IX of 1884

Kashmiris' tradition and part of their future. The Hinduism he envisioned, however, was a far less restrictive one than that the community was beginning to embrace.

In his essays in the *Safir-i-Kashmir* and those published in the *Tufai-i-Shamim*, Raina wrote about 'the strange condition of the Kashmiris who follow all traditions because nothing is their own.'[21] The consequence of their minority status, Shamim thought, was to make the Kashmiris weak and conservative; they lacked the courage to change. This was especially alarming when he contrasted the Pandits' situation with that of other communities.

'Hundreds [of Punjabi Hindus] have done B. A.s and M. A.s; They have changed their eating habits, clothes, and way of life very quickly. While not more than ten people have gone to England from north India, more than thirty have already returned from the Punjab and more than fifty are coming back soon.'[22] Shamim found the Kashmiris of Lucknow paralysed and divided. If the Pandits of the Punjab were changing, he feared, it was merely in that their new affluence enabled them to imitate the Lucknowis' extravagance, rather than the Punjabi Hindus' more practical investments.

Although Shamim did not idealize Kashmir itself to the extent Dattatreya had, he sought to introduce simplicity into the community by portraying that quality as part of the inheritance brought by Pandits from the Valley before they succumbed to the rituals and requirements of religion in the plains. Shamim was especially preoccupied with the acquired restrictions on food, neither Kashmiri nor Hindu originally. The practice of depending on Kashmiri cooks was, for example, a great impediment to education because it meant that students were unable to reside in government boarding houses, and because it imposed a financial burden which many Kashmiris could ill afford. The injunction was not be found in the Shastras, there was no religious basis for the practice. Shamim's opinions on the subjection of dietary prescriptions were neatly summarized in a short story entitled, 'Tale of a Kashmiri Pandit Student'.[23] The tale portrayed the varying situations of a Punjabi Hindu (a Khattri), a Muslim, and a Pandit, all of whom lived in the same *muhalla*.

[21]S. N. Raina 'Shamim', *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Feb. 1896).
[22]Ibid. (June 1894).
[23]S. N. Raina 'Shamim', *Tale of a Kashmiri Pandit Student* (Lahore, 1893).

'The Kashmiri's forefathers were well off but had left little having spent it all on marriages.' The three students all passed their entrance examinations the same year. The Muslim went off to Aligarh and the Khattri to Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College, 'which is cheap and makes a man a proper Hindu.' The Kashmiri was prevented from enrolling at the Arya institution because the *biradari* did not allow its members to eat food prepared by any but a Kashmiri cook. The Kashmiri was sent to the home of his in-laws in Lahore, after much lamentation. 'He felt that those living in Lahore can never understand the problem faced in these matters by the Pandits of smaller cities with no colleges.'

The Kashmiri student was so ill-treated by his in-laws, he decided to take cheap lodgings elsewhere and cook his own food. He soon became sick, however, and returned to his own parents. His father sold the family jewels and sent his son once more to the capital with the proceeds. But the money, inevitably, ran out; the boy then joined the Dayanand College. The climax of the story took place at a tempestuous community meeting where the student finally was able to explain how his family had suffered as a result of the restrictions. Needless to say, he was not excommunicated and all ended well.

Much the same theme was developed in the 'Story of a Pandit Clerk'.[24] The clerk in question worked in the office of the deputy commissioner along with a Khattri and a Muslim, the same supporting cast as in the preceding tale.

The Kashmiri had to cook his own food whenever the entourage travelled. This inconvenience frequently delayed the conscientious Pandit and so enraged his supervisor that the unfortunate Kashmiri was demoted. Finally, he and several other Kashmiris also in government service decided to hire an Indian Brahman cook: defensive action is better taken jointly.

Soon there was a movement within the community to excommunicate the clerks, which subsided when the clerks countered it with observations on the behavioural lapses of the formally orthodox. (The response echoed the poetry written in defense of Bishen Narain Dar, similarly questioning the propriety of those who regarded visits abroad as far more objectionable than visits to the local dancing girl.) *The Story of a Kashmiri Pandit Rais* presented

[24]S. N. Raina Shamim, *Story of a Pandit Clerk* (Lahore, 1893).

a more pedantic expression of the same theme.[25] It was in the form of a dialogue between a *rais* and his neighbour, Raj Nath. 'The diwan is a good man but very reluctant to change any old custom. No rich person has ever been in favour of a change in custom.' The *diwan* is distressed to learn that Raj Nath had employed an Indian Brahman cook; the debate between the two concerning this departure formed the bulk of the tale. According to the *diwan*, to hire a *deshi* cook was wrong because Kashmiris in Kashmir itself did not do so; secondly, it was only a few members of the community who risked impoverishment as a result of the injunction. Moreover, Kashmiri cooks were essential for the proper performance of rituals, and finally, because they came into contact with the Panditanis.

These arguments were countered by Raj Nath's claim that the Pandits of north India faced special circumstances unlike those of the Kashmiris of the valley. But more importantly, 'Kashmiri Brahmins are part of the Brahmin community and religion says nothing against eating other Brahmins' food. Kashmiri Brahmins should not isolate themselves from other Indian Brahmins.'

The simplicity of the Pandits of Kashmir itself was evoked in the final tale of the quartet, 'Tale of the Kashmiri Pandit Traveller'.[26] Much of the story was written from the point of view of a Punjabi Khattri, the fellow traveller of the Pandit. The Khattri contrasted the Kashmiri's behaviour in the Punjab to his behaviour while in his homeland; his observations constituted Shamim's theme, the absurdity of the customs the Pandits had acquired subsequent to arrival in the plains. The Khattri, for example, was amazed to discover how free the Kashmiri was in his eating habits once he left the Punjab, even taking water from a Muslim. The Khattri thought that there was no reason for the Kashmiris not to hire 'desi' Brahmans in the plains, they should 'identify with other Hindus and associate with them, giving up the rootless life and settling in the Punjab.' Shamim's Pandit complained at one point that other Hindus avoided the Pandits, but the author indicated the choice lay with the Kashmiris who regarded the Indian Brahmans as illiterate parasites. In the end, predictably enough, the Kashmiri hired an Indian Brahman cook, and rose to such elevated heights that not only was he not excommunicated, but other Kashmiris approached him for jobs.

[25]S. N. Raina Shamim, *Tale of a Kashmiri Pandit Rais* (Lahore, 1893).
[26]Shiv Narain Shamim, *Tale of a Kashmiri Pandit Traveller* (Lahore, 1893).

Nothing, Shamim suggested, is impossible once the correct reforms have been implemented. Success will always guarantee acceptance.

If Shamim advocated Hinduism as a solution to community problems, it was more as an identification with other Hindus than as a religious affirmation. Shamim found as much fault in the orthodox Hindu practices of the plains, not merely from the perspective of the original simplicity of Hinduism, but from a more detached standard. In adopting this critical stance, he moved away from both the mainstream of Punjabi Hinduism and the direction of his own community.

The *Tarikh-i-Panditon-Kashmiri* contained an overview of the social life of the Pandits at the end of the nineteenth century. It included a summary of the social customs and religious rituals of the Pandits, illustrating the manner in which the Kashmiris became increasingly burdened by them. Shamim was always rational but not extreme in his analysis, urging modification rather than abolition of practices. He adopted an historical approach in an apparent effort to de-mystify the ceremonies. Of the *mundan*, or head shaving, he wrote in charactaristic fashion: 'This is usually done when the boy is five or six. It involves unnecessary expenses, as much as Rs 150. It is perhaps based on some incident when the head was shaved to show humility. Slaves had their heads shaved. After some time it became very common to have the head shaved to show respect to gods, masters and elders. It is not suggested here that the practice be stopped but the expense should be stopped.'[27]

At a time when Hinduism was becoming ever more closely identified with respect for cows, Shamim lamented, 'We have become dogmatic about what our books say about the importance of the cow. They are important and should be treated with respect and care, but we should not literally worship them. Some Hindus are fanatic about cows and Shah Alam had to prohibit slaughter of cows on demand of some fanatic Hindus. This is ridiculous.'

Shamim believed that 'any community which practices "chootchat" [the rules of purity and pollution] was doomed to fall.'His concern with Hinduism's excessive preoccupation with behavioural rules went beyond his own community to Hindu society in general. His harshest judgements on this subject appeared in a long

[27]Shamim, *Tarikh*.

novel entitled, *M. A. Banakar, Meere Zindagi Kuon Kharab Diya* (Why Have I Ruined My Life in Doing My M. A.).[28]

The central character in this work was not a Kashmiri but a Rajput named Nanak Chand, whose progressive disenchantment with the Hindu religion provided the theme of the novel. A series of characters were presented, each a stereotype of a particular social group found in the Punjab. Many first appeared as applicants for a clerkship offered by a Parsi businessman. The Kashmiri applicant, for example, had passed his entrance examination but had not gone to college because his father, an accountant, did not dare send him to a boarding house and risk, thereby, the wrath of the community. Although he spoke English adequately, the Kashmiri was rejected because he lacked sufficient education. 'Beautiful writing is not enough.'The Bengali applicant was likewise dismissed. He had a degree but not the requisite culture. The Muslim, unfettered by the restrictions that made the Parsi reluctant to hire a Hindu was not accepted because of the hostility between Parsis and Muslims derived from Persian history

Missing from the novel—was a positive figure who combined the style of the Kashmiri with the knowledge of the Bengali. The ideal, the *sharif admi*, was absent. The educational system with its obsessive emphasis on examinations produced neither grace nor wisdom. Although Shamim was not given to nostalgic praise of the past, the objections to the current system were grounded in a certain set of values which were the especial concern of the Pandits: the insistence on utility was not sufficient. Shamim had a sense of a beauty that was missing. But more than an indictment of the educational system, the work was an attack on Hindu religion. The Indian woman clad in her robes was for Shamim a symbol of all Hindus, as confined in their lives as she in her garments. The lives of Hindu males too were circumscribed. Exclaimed Nanak Chand, ['Hindus] can't progress. First they don't want to and even if they wanted to they could not because of the social pressures.' In the end, Nanak Chand renounced Hinduism altogether. He became a convert to Buddhism and decided to build a college dedicated to true wisdom.

This improbable conclusion was one Shamim adopted in his own

[28]S. N. Raina Shamim, *M. A. Banakar, Meere Zindagi Kuon Kharab Diya* (Lahore, 1900).

life. Although he never explicitly advocated Buddhism in his non-fiction, lest it detract from the solutions he proposed to the community, his conversion suggested he found his hopes unrealizable. It proved too difficult to urge Pandits to establish closer ties with Hindus while demanding they cast off behaviour dictated by consideration of *choot-chat*.

The weakness Shiv Narain feared would preclude positive reforms finally produced change that was narrow and regressive. The community adapted, but it did not advance. The direction it took was not that which Shamim espoused, for the Kashmiris became more rather than less dogmatic. Today Shiv Narain is not forgotten, but he is recalled as an eccentric by later generations of Kashmiris, as 'our Buddhist' [29]

[29]Interview with J. K. Kitchloo, Delhi, Aug. 1979.

CHAPTER XV

# The Growth of Communalism in Punjab

In 1873, three years before the Arya Samaj was established in Lahore, Dayanand Saraswati was invited to the home of Daya Nidhan Ganjoo in Lucknow, where he gave a lecture to the assembled Pandits on how the Hindu religion ought to be interpreted according to the Vedas.[1] North India was familiar with the ideas of Saraswati, but they never became part of the cultural landscape of Hindusthan as they did in the Punjab. Everything in the Punjab was touched by communal considerations to a greater degree than elsewhere. This was at least partly due to the success of the Arya Samaj in recommending religion, albeit in amended form, as a solution to the dilemmas of the time in an environment in which all religious groups felt insecure. Kenneth Jones explains this insecurity in the following terms: 'Arya ideology filled the psychological vacuum felt by marginal and alienated Hindus striving to relate both to their parental world and the new anglicized reality of British India. The class interests of an emerging Hindu élite converged with Arya ideology which stressed literacy and the need for Vedic knowledge. Both focused on education as the path to spiritual and worldly success. It lay at the nexus of hope and fear. The threat of apostasy cast gloom over the rewards inherent in the new economic opportunities. Aryas would provide an answer to this dilemma, a chance to acquire English education without fear of conversion or the loss of one's soul to Christianity or godless materialism.'[2]

Only religion could provide the reassurance that would make education safe. The rapid growth of the Arya Samaj was both a

[1] *Murasla-i-Kashmir* (Nov. 1873).
[2] Jones, *Arya Dharm*, p.66.

reflection of the greater salience of communal identity in the Punjab and a contributing factor to it. 'Aryas recognized the new world's demand for English literacy and sought that literacy within a milieu of revived Hinduism.'[3] The Aryan solution found broad acceptance because it both minimized the alienation of the new generation from their past and from the mass of society. By bringing religion into the foreground, the Aryas were establishing a commonality of different classes.

Formerly, an Urdu-speaking Hindu member of the administrative élite shared far more with a Muslim in the same social situation than with a Hindu of a lower social stratum, but this was becoming increasingly less true. It was the literate government servants who had always showed the strongest cross-communal links, and it was precisely in this social group that the Arya Samaj won its earliest adherents. As a result the Samaj contributed to the erosion of these critical cross-communal links. In 1891, the Census took cognizance of the supporters the Samaj had enlisted in noting: 'Its influence is quite out of proportion to its numbers because its recruitment is entirely from the English educated classes and its tenets are most popular among pleaders, government servants and those with the greatest pretensions to mental enlightenment.[4]

In the Punjab, the distance between the western educated and the traditional was smaller; the reduced social cost of modern education, however, was at the expense of communal relations. Those who should have been most secular were marked, instead, by a heightened communal consciousness.

In U. P. it was possible, in the late nineteenth century, to be religiously neutral. In the Punjab this was more difficult. Competition and controversy marked both inter-religious encounters and intra-religious relations. Within Hindu society there was bitter disagreement and factionalism but where there was agreement, such as on the sanctity of the cow or of the Sanskrit language and Devanagari script, convergent belief was assertively expressed, principally in the form of an attack on those who challenged these tenets. The very definition of Hinduism became narrower, focusing only on a few criteria about which there was broadest consensus. Even the fact that Hinduism was being defined, that a previously amorphous body of varying beliefs should be made explicit, served to delineate boundaries. The fact that groups such as

[3]Ibid., p. 69.

[4]*Census of India*, Punjab, 1891, p. 189.

the Arya Samaj espoused the application of rules of *choot chat* to non-Hindus as they simultaneously advocated their reduction among Hindus reinforced the growing gulf between Hindus and Muslims. The call, however, did not create this gulf.

Although Hari Kishen Kaul, author of the 1911 Census, cautioned that 'what a Hindu is expected to conform to depends on the group to which he belongs,' he was able, in his definition of Hinduism, to generalize that 'a rule observed more strictly than any other is respect for the cow. No Hindu will eat beef.'[5]

In other respects, the Pandit's definition was marked by a singular lack of particulars. A Hindu was an individual who was 'born to parents not belonging to some recognized religion other than Hinduism, marries within the same limits, believes in God, respects the cow and cremates the dead.'[6] The 'belief in God' conspicuously skirted the question of idolatry which was then one of the major sources of disagreement within the Hindu community.

The development of serious alternative educational institutions was a major factor in the success of the Arya Samaj in the Punjab. There was nothing comparable to the Dayanand Anglo Vedic School which opened in Lahore in 1886 in north India. Although its history was marked by repeated conflicts between those who thought it should emphasize the skills that would enable Punjabi Hindus to compete successfully in the new conditions established by the British Raj, and those who wished to see an emphasis on a more traditional, pious training, the main thrust of the school was clearly in the former direction. In 1889–90, the enrolment of the college was a meagre thirty-eight, but five years later, it had multiplied almost tenfold, and had passed the largest number of students in the F. A. examination in the province.[7] In 1897–8, the education report noted that the Dayanand College had sent up the most candidates for both the intermediate and bachelors exam, and had produced the only first-level B. A. and five of the fourteen firsts in the intermediate examination.[8] The Census of 1891 further attested to the 'considerable success' of the school in preparing its students for the university examinations.[9] The strength of the college, remarked Kenneth Jones, 'lay beyond the Arya

[5] *Punjabi Census*, 1911, p. 108.
[6] Ibid., p. 109.
[7] *RPE*, Punjab 1895 Appendix 'e', lxvi–ii.
[8] *RPE*, Punjab 1898, p. 29.
[9] *Census for the Punjab*, 1891, p. 178.

Samaj in the general Hindu community. It appealed widely to Hindus of the commercial and Brahmanical castes who sought a safe education for their sons.'[10]

Moreover, the influence of the school was not confined merely to Lahore. According to Jones, the 'expansion in education meant a recreating of the Dayanand Anglo Vedic College throughout the province.'

It meant as well that the newly educated would speak the language of the English but would not adopt either their secular or their religious values. The College thus created a class capable of bridging the gap between English and Punjabi and between past and future, but not between Muslim and Hindu. Organizations established in the Punjab after 1880 perpetuated the communalist bent of the graduates of Dayanand College, injecting religious considerations into cultural and, following the devolution of local self-government, into political processes. The contrary pulls of religion and culture which characterized the Pandits of north India were replaced in the Punjab by a more congruent set of influences.

In 1882, the Hindu Sabha of Lahore was formed under the presidency of Raja Harbans Singh, to be followed shortly thereafter by the creation of a Hindu Sabha in Amritsar. The same year groups dedicated to the promotion of language associated with the essence of Hinduism were organized as well; these included the Sanskrit Pracharani Sabha and the Bhasha Pracharani Sabha.[11] This was also the year in which Dayanand Saraswati established his Gorakshani Sabha, or cow protection society. His purpose, wrote John Farquhar, 'was to rouse Hindu feeling against Christians and Muslims.'[12] Numerous local societies sprung up in the years after Saraswati's death. While the literary and cultural societies of the U. P. were confined to the cities where the literate classes resided, these cow protection societies were a province-wide rather than exclusively urban phenomenon.

'The initial Samaj impact on the Hindu community was divisive,' according to Kenneth Jones, 'pitting militant reformers against the orthodox.'[13] In response to attacks on idolatry and

[10]Jones, *Arya Dharm*, p. 225.

[11]*Administration Report for the Punjab*, 1882, pp. 284, 286.

[12]J. N. Farquhar, *Modern Religious Movements in India* (1914) (Delhi, 1967), p.111.

[13]Jones, *Journal*, Dec., 1968, p.47, 'Communalism in the Punjab, the Arya Contribution'

other tenets of the Hindu religion, the orthodox began to organize their own defensive associations directed as much against other Hindus as against non-Hindus. In 1895, the forerunner of the Bharat Dharm Mahamandala, the Sanatan Dharm Sabha, was established in Hardwar by the Punjabi Brahman, Din Dayal Sharma.[14] This intra-religious controversy tended to heighten religious awareness as much as the inter-communal competition, contributing to the greater religious consciousness among the Pandits of Punjab relative to the Kashmiris of the Northwest Provinces.

As the associations formed in the Punjab displayed a greater communal bent, so did the press. 'The printing press became a major weapon of religious controversy. Books, pamphlets, and periodicals appeared in a widening stream which carried in it the rising consciousness of communal identity.'[15]

The Kashmiri community played a major role in the development of the press in the Punjab, especially in the evolution of the communalist press. There were two families who made especially significant contributions to the communalist press of Lahore, the Kaul brothers and the Gurtoos.

Mukund Ram was a Gurtoo Razdan born in Srinagar in 1831 to the *purohit* (i. e. *guru* Pandit) Daya Ram.[16] Daya Ram became a *sadhu* soon after Mukund Ram's birth, leaving his son to his brother, Sahaj Ram. But Mukund Ram did not get on well with his uncle's family, and while still young, in 1848 set out penniless for Lahore. He took a room in the city with a Kashmiri family for an annual payment of a few annas.The ambitious Pandit rented a small shop for 2 annas monthly and established a calligraphy business, but in Sanskrit rather than the Persian calligraphy to which so many Pandits in Lucknow turned. A copy of the Bhagavad Gita done for a wealthy Rajput led to many orders, and soon the copyist had established himself sufficiently for the family with whom he lived to propose that he marry their daughter.According to his

[14]Farquhar, *Modern Religious Movements*, p. 316.

[15]Jones, *Communalism*, p. 47.

[16]This account of Mukund Ram's life is taken from interviews with two of his grand sons, Ladli Nath Gurtoo in Srinagar in July 1979 and Brij Kishen Gurtoo in Delhi in August 1979; and from *The Late Mukund Ram by his son Kanhaya Lal*, reprint Lahore, 1900

son, Kanhaya Lal, 'from his earning 2 annas daily he rose to be the Chaudhuri of all the calligraphists of Lahore and transacted business of 1000 rupees. From thence through the help and encouragement of the late chief Pandit Radha Kishen, he was successful in establishing his press, the Mitra Vilas in 1861.'[17]

The Mitra Vilas Press was established to publish 'old manuscripts and new works of distinguished scholars of Sanskrit of the rising generation.'[18] From publishing books and pamphlets in 1871 the press began to print a newspaper known as the *Akhbar-i-am*, which had the distinction of being labelled 'the most scurrilous in the province' by the authorities.[19]

Official sources recorded that 'when the Pandit was very badly off, some Pandits of government employ subscribed toward starting the present paper.'[20] His son referred to the existence of a committee 'the then members whereof now occupy the highest positions in the Public Service—' who delegated the management of the weekly to Mukund Ram in spite of his lack of journalistic experience and his minimal knowledge of Urdu.[21] When it was launched there was only one other newspaper in the Punjab, which sold for four annas. The price of the *Akhbar-i-am* was set at the low price of one anna.

Four years after the *Akhbar-i-am* was launched, Mukund Ram started the *Mitra Vilas*, which was to be the only Hindi weekly journal in the province. The success of the *Akhbar* was not matched by that of the *Mitra Vilas*; Mukund Ram's effort to popularize Hindi was apparently premature.[22] The circulation of the Urdu newspaper was 1,700 while that of the Hindi paper was only 250 copies.[23]

'The *Mitra Vilas* has been run on a perpetual loss,' declared Kanhaya Lal in 1898, twenty-three years after its founding. But Mukund Ram would remark, 'Consider this loss a gain in the cause of your religion and language . . . consider this as an item of regular charitable expense.'[24]

In spite of the liability imposed by the Hindi venture, Mukund

[17]Kanhaya Lal, *Mukund Ram*, p. 9.
[18]Ibid., p. 10. [19]Barrier and Wallace, *Press*, p. 15.
[20]Ibid., p. 14. [21]Kanhaya Lal, *Mukund Ram*, p. 14.
[22]Kanhaya Lal, *Mukund Ram*, p. 10 and interviews with Ladli Nath Gurtoo and Brij Kishen Gurtoo.
[23]Barrier Wallace, *Press*, pp. 14, 87.
[24]Kanhaya Lal, *Mukund Ram*, pp. 10-11.

Ram managed to prosper. He bought a house 'which was so big the doors opened out on different bazaars,'[25] in which he raised his six sons and three daughters.

The press became increasingly profitable through its exploitation of communal questions and by subsidies from the native states. On the one hand, the *Mitra Vilas* was followed by several explicitly religious ventures such as the *Sanatan Dharm Gazette*; while on the other, the *Peoples' Journal,* an English monthly, was directed at the uneasy rulers of the native states.[26] Mukund Ram's eldest son, Gopi Nath, who was born in 1863, specialized in extracting contributions from princes who were made to feel that otherwise their administrations might well become the focus of undesirable publicity. After a period of study in Government College, Gopi Nath left Lahore on periodic rounds of the princely capitals. 'Catering to the needs of the princes was a way to raise money and to finance the paper,' explained one of the descendants of Gopi Nath. 'He was a genius at collecting funds and blackmailing princes.'[27]

Kashmir was the most attractive source of profits for the Pandit and his son. With money obtained from Pratap Singh, the Maharaja of Kashmir (1885–1925), Gopi Nath carried on a vigorous defence of the ruler of Kashmir against the allegedly predatory British Resident.[28] The *Akhbar-i-am* was at the forefront of the debate about the possible supersession of the Maharaja, contemplated by the then Viceroy, Lord (Henry) Lansdowne (1888-94). The Viceroy's despatch to the Home Office concerning supersession was ultimately obtained and published by the *Amrita Bazaar Patrika*, an action in which Gopi Nath was involved. The *Akhbar-i-am* and the Calcutta paper were joined by the *Tribune* of Lahore in sending a representative to London to argue Pratap Singh's case directly to the British Parliament. Ghose believed that by stimulating opposition in advance, the press was probably instrumental in the eventual decision not to annex Kashmir.[29] *The Selections from the Vernacular Press* (the official collection of local extracts) contained numerous excerpts

[25]Interview with Ladli Nath Gurtoo, Srinagar, July 1979.
[26]Barrier and Wallace, *Press*, p. 133.
[27]Interview with Brij Kishen Gurtoo, Delhi, August 1979.
[28]Ibid.
[29]D.K. Ghose, *Kashmir in Translation, 1885 to 1893* (Calcutta 1975), p. 106.

from the *Akhbar-i-am* in which the Maharaja and the state administration were praised, and the claim advanced that 'attacks made by newspapers against Kashmir are due to ignorance and prejudice.'[30] Kashmir was not the exclusive focus of the *Akhbar's* solicitude, however. The relations of Gopi Nath with the Maharaja of Dharbhanga were also strong. This was a double bond, for the Maharaja was a patron of the orthodox Hindu movement in the Punjab and was president of the National Conference of the various Sanatan Dharm Sabhas that preceded the formation of the Bharat Dharm Mahamandala[31] while Gopi Nath was general secretary of the All India Sanatan Dharm Sabha. Gopi Nath was on the payroll of Darbhanga for many years twards the end of his life. He joined the Maharaja's service in 1927, and remained a nominal employee until his death in 1940. The Maharaja's recommendation secured for Gopi Nath's son, Dina Nath, entrance into the Forest Service, and another son, Hira Lal, was also employed by Darbhanga.[32]

Mukund Ram became very religious in the years before his death; his son described how the old Pandit would walk to the river every morning for his ablutions, 'dressed in his peculiar, simple, Bhagat-like clothes' including a *ram-nami dupatta*.[33] Evenings would find the Pandit at home where 'religious books like the *Yoga Vaistha,* the *Ramayana,* and the *Mahabharata* in Hindi were studied and read to his friends.'[34] The religious journals, such as the *Sanatan Dharm Gazette* could conceivably be regarded as an extension of Mukund Ram's private beliefs, beliefs shaped and strengthened by his origins as a *guru* rather than as a *karkun* Pandit.

After Mukund Ram's death in December 1897, control of the family enterprises fell largely to Gopi Nath and the virulent tone of the papers grew. Gopi Nath, on one occasion, secretly attended a meeting of the Anjuman Islamiya to report on its nefarious doings in his editorials, and likewise attacked the Arya Samajis, then charging that it was the Samaj members—'not Hindus'—'who sow

[30]*Selections from the Vernacular Press*, 1885, *Akhbar-i-am,* 12 December, p. 912.

[31]J.N. Farquhar, *Modern Religious Movements*, p. 317.

[32]Interview with Brij Kishen Gurtoo.

[33]Kanhaya Lal, *Mukund Ram*, p. 15.

[34]Ibid., p. 16.

the seeds of enmity between Hindu and Muslim and bar the socio-religious progress of the Hindus.'[35]

The attacks launched by Gopi Nath resulted in a counter barrage directed more at the Pandit than at his philosophy. The battle reached its climax in 1901. In January 1901, the *Sat Dharm Paracharak* of Jullunder accused Gopi Nath of 'inflaming everybody Hindu, Muslim and Christian against the apparently hapless Arya Samaj.'

'It is regrettable that a member of Hindu society who knows very little Sanskrit and whose interests are wholly selfish should bring on these troubles . . . . He writes for fear that Hindus will join the Arya Samaj and his income will dwindle.'[36] The motives of Gopi Nath were not exactly vindicated by an article appearing two weeks later in the *Akhbar-i-am* in which the Pandit asked for money for his brother's wedding. His finances had received a setback, he explained, when he lost 3,000 rupees in a libel case brought by the Arya Samaj for an article entitled 'Holi Jokes' in which the editor had cast aspersions on the Samaj.[37] The Jullunder paper charged in its February 1 edition that Gopi Nath was trying to turn the government against the Arya Samaj, and accused the Pandit of being in favour of the slaughter of cows.[38] This accusation was strengthened by mid-summer when Gopi Nath was accused of actually eating beef.

The Pandit who had aroused nation-wide support (a Bombay paper had even solicited funds for the editor who was said to be a 'remarkably poor man who owes his present difficulties to the zeal with which he fights for Hinduism')[39] was suddenly abandoned as the model of orthodoxy.

The *Sanatan Dharm Gazette* appeared irregularly that year, while the beleaguered Pandit answered the legal charges of his critics. The *Gazette* of August–September carried Gopi Nath's confession of 'lust and weakness': the Pandit said in his editorial that he would have committed suicide if it had not been a sin, but

[35]*Selections from the Vernacular Press*, 1899, *Akhbar-i-am*, 30 March, p, 205.

[36]Ibid., 1901, *Sat Dharm Parachak*, Jullunder, Jan. 11, p. 101.

[37]Ibid., *Akbar-i-am*, Jan. 25, p. 460. This was just one of many libel suits faced by Gopi Nath. See for further examples *Selections* 1884 and Barrier and Wallace, *Press*, pp. 14-15.

[38]Ibid., *Sanatan Dharam Parachak*, 1 Feb., p. 120.

[39]Vaik Untheshwar, reproduced in *Sanatan Dharm Gazette*, 1 Jan., p. 125.

he denied taking prostitutes to meetings of the Dharm Sabha, denied that he had identified with the orthodox to make money, and denied having eaten beef. He had, the editorial continued, severed his connection with both the Dharm Sabha and the Theosophical Society. The editor concluded by informing his readers that he was reading the Ramayana to soothe himself and would eventually write an Urdu commentary in the *Gazette*.[40]

The newspapers of the province gave wide publicity to Gopi Nath's behaviour. The *Public Gazette* expressed its joy at the exposure of the hypocrite, while the *Paise Akbar* wrote that the affair was 'the chief conversation in the city... Copies of the judgement were published in Urdu and English and thousands were sold. The letters and other evidence show it was all for money.'[41] The *Punjab Samachar* expressed 'surprise that a man regarded as the leader of the Dharm Sabha and a supporter of the cow protection movement proved to have eaten beef, drunk and visited prostitutes.'[42]

After this incident Gopi Nath was more indirect if no less muted in his attacks. In the *Akhbar-i-am* of the following year, for example, the much prosecuted Pandit wrote a series of sketches entitled 'Chu Chu ka Muabba', an account of what befell a fictitious personage. The readers were cautioned 'never to try to ascertain the real identity of the diverse characters to be met with', which included chiefs, officials, native state rulers, pleaders, *darbaris*,*raises*, editors, *munsifs* and honorary magistrates.[43] This precaution notwithstanding, Gopi Nath, and his brother Gobind Sahai were fined for obscenity for this literary endeavour.[44]

As editor of one of the largest provincial papers, Gopi Nath was automatically a prominent figure in Lahore society. It is difficult, however, to ascertain the degree to which he was respected by that society. The British did not look upon him kindly for his attacks on the British authorities in Kashmir, and his later involvement in the Congress movement in the Punjab. The *Akbar-i-am* was described in 1880 as 'the most scurrilous in the province'; twenty years later, the official judgment was that the publication 'has considerable

[40]Ibid., Aug.-Sept., pp. 639–40.
[41]Ibid., *Public Gazette*, 24 Sep., *Paise Akbar* 28 Sept., p. 640.
[42]Ibid., 1901, *Punjab Samachar*, Sept. 7, p. 574.
[43]Ibid., 1902, *Akbar-i-am*, Jan. 1, pp. 23–4.
[44]Barrier and Wallace, *Press*, p. 14.

influence, no good on the whole.'[45] The *Mitra Vilas* was said to be 'most hostile to the government. It seizes every opportunity of creating bad feeling between Hindus and Mohammadans by bringing prominently to notice acts of kine killing and religious disputes. It also taunts the government with its fear of the Mohammadans whom it declares unloyal, and with its oppression of the mild Hindus.''[46]

Within Hindu society, Gopi Nath was not given the deference which a man who so publicly affirmed his Hindu beliefs usually was accorded. Even before the legal battles which discredited him, Gopi Nath was absent at gatherings of the Indian élite,[47] nor did he undertake the sort of patronage (for example serving on the board of the college), a public figure was expected to perform.

Gopi Nath seemed as quarrelsome in his private life as in his public life. Although the family originally lived as a joint one, the six brothers eventually dispersed, usually following arguments with the eldest. Gobind Sahai worked closely with Gopi Nath, but became addicted to opium and died fairly young. Kanhaya Lal, who was editor of the *Peoples Journal*, went abroad. After his disagreements with Gopi Nath, Hari Kishen, who was more closely associated with the *Sanatan Dharm Gazette*, went off to Kashmir, married a Kashmiri Panditani and established an import–export business. Bal Kishen worked on the *Akhbar-i-am* with Gopi Nath, until a final split in 1931 ended the paper. Pran Kishen, the treasurer of the operation, was the only brother to have maintained equable relations with Gopi Nath.[48]

Mukund Ram began his career as a penniless Pandit of the guru group. Within two generations, however, the family was marrying into the wealthiest Pandit families of the plains. Mukund Ram's six sons married humbly, generally to *patwari*-level families in the Punjab, but two of Mukund Ram's three daughters married into U.P. families, one in Allahabad and one in Lucknow. Given that their husbands' surnames were Gurtoo and Raina, it is possible that they too were originally from the guru subdivision. The next

[45]Barrier and Wallace, *Press*, p. 15.

[46]Ibid., p. 87.

[47]The pages of the *Tribune*, for example, list those attending public meetings to celebrate the nomination of certain native, or to commemorate a particular event. Gopi Nath does not appear in these lists.

[48]Interview with Brij Kishen Gurtoo and Ladli Nath Gurtoo.

generation married well. The Gurtoos had arrived. But within the Kashmiri community structure, the stature of Gopi Nath himself was not very high and he never held a position of leadership.

Mukund Ram Gurtoo was said to have been a friend of Raja Suraj Kaul, with whom he met weekly. Both men were, predictably, Dharm Sabhites. Relations between the next generation were less cordial, however. There was a certain rivalry between Gopi Nath and Daya Kishen Kaul, according to Gopi Nath's son, because the latter never forgot that the Gurtoo family had originally been the Kaul family purohit and Bal Kishen Kaul, the brother of Daya Kishen, had been married by a Gurtoo.[49] One possible manifestation of this was the unrelenting criticism of the state of Patiala in the pages of the *Akhbar-i-am*, a state with which Daya Kishen Kaul was closely associated.

There were many other Kashmiris who became involved in the press in the Punjab; in some ways it was a logical extension of the Pandit specialization in literate callings. One other family became similarly involved in the communal, extremist press: the Kaul brothers, Har Gopal and Salig Ram. The Kaul brothers, however, took a stand diametrically opposed to that of the Gurtoos; they were hostile to Kashmir.

What made the Kaul brothers and the Gurtoos unique was not their particular views but rather the intensity with which they were held, and the unidimensional direction of their endeavours: the fact that their communalism was so aggressively endorsed, not softened and made safer by countervailing activities.

[49]Interview with Brij Kishen Gurtoo.

CHAPTER XVI

# Punjab in the Late Nineteenth Century : Economic Patterns

While the press contributed to the growth of communalism in Punjabi society, underlying economic configurations were more directly responsible. The 1911 Census noted that the commerce of the Punjab tended to be monopolized by Hindus;[1] thus the Hindus' numerical status as a minority was to some degree offset by the fact that the province's wealth was concentrated in Hindu hands. Hindu domination of the economy meant Hindu domination of the cities; the deep division between urban and rural interests was also a communal one between the largely Hindu city dweller and overwhelmingly Muslim peasantry. This was, as the Census noted, just the opposite of the pattern of the U. P.

From the late nineteenth century, communal concerns overlay economic questions in the Punjab. Economic boycotts along communal lines were part of the Punjab's history in the 1880s; in his evidence to the Public Service Commission, Muharram Ali referred to the boycott of Muslim carriage drivers, grocers, doctors, and lawyers by Hindus of one Punjabi city.[2] Later, according to Kenneth Jones, 'communal mobilization led to the mobilization of capital, which in turn, was invested in land, trade or industry.'[3] Factions within the Hindu commercal elite were likewise rooted in communal considerations. Jones found two principal groups of entrepreneurs, one composed of Aryas, the other consisting largely of Brahmos or members of the orthodox community.[4] Both the fact of industrialization and the limited nature of that industrialization served to heighten tensions, particularly communal tensions, within the province.

[1] *Punjab Census*, 1911, p. 14.
[2] *Public Service Commission*, Punjab, p. 204.
[3] Jones, *Arya Dharm*, p. 177.
[4] Ibid., p. 108.

In its report to the Public Service Commission in 1886, the Punjab Government took note of the 'material improvements' over which it had presided, drawing particular attention to the capital invested in canals, the rapid extension of the railway and the export of wheat, which was 'due to the increase in the means of communication with the seaboard.'[5]

But the introduction of the railways, centralized administration, and the use of steam power in small-scale factories resulted in the decline of small towns, the end of the relative self-sufficiency of Punjabi villages, and the bankruptcy of numerous artisans.[6] Disruption as much as modernization marked the Punjabi economy toward the end of the nineteenth century. A colonial economy, as Kenneth Jones has noted, was only allowed limited modernization.[7]

As late as 1921, the authors of the census commented on the limited development of the Punjabi economy. Middleton attributed this lack of development to the fact that the sources of energy, oil, coal, and iron, were separate from each other, that the demands of the population were slight, and finally that the sea lay far distant from the province. Industry, he wrote, exists 'only for local requirements, especially food processing and textiles.[8] He found flour mills, ice factories, tanneries, wool mills, and the beginnings of a construction business, in a few saw mills and cement works. But exports were almost entirely of raw materials.[9]

The significance of this was that the economy could not generate enough additional resources to absorb the demands of the educated and reduce intercommunal competition. Middleton noted that 'the demand for industrialization comes from those seeking to employ capital and from the middle class seeking employment outside the literary professions which are overcrowded.'[10] The demand was not satisfied.

Developments after 1900 served to alienate the commercial middle class further. The immediate result of the Land Alienation Act which was passed to halt the rapid transfer of the landholdings of debt-ridden peasants (who happened largely to be Muslim) to

[5] *Public Service Commission*, Punjab, p. 38.
[6] *Punjab Census*, 1901, p. 21.
[7] Jones, *Arya Dharm*, p. 180.
[8] *Punjab Census*, 1921, p. 21.
[9] Ibid., 1911, p. 526.
[10] Ibid., 1921, p. 787.

moneylenders (who were generally Hindu) was to prevent the urban middle class from investing their capital in rural, agricultural ventures.[11] Economic discontents were channelled into political agitation.

The Punjabis both injected communalism into nationalistic politics and introduced the question of swadeshi into the Congress. The two were not unrelated. According to Kenneth Jones, Aryas first discussed the need for indigenous industry during the 1880s, following the government's imposition of an excise tax on Indian cotton goods.[12] It was Hindu middle class unhappiness over restrictions on their acquisition of agricultural land imposed by the Land Alienation Act which brought their first spark of interest in the Congress. It was unfortunate that it focused on an issue which placed the provincial Congress against the interests of Punjabi Muslims.[13]

The Kashmiri Pandits of the Punjab were far more involved in provincial economic transformations than they were in north India, where the nawabi tradition lay heavier upon them, as it did upon the entire region. Both the occupational and the investment patterns in the Punjab were more diversified at an earlier date than those of members of the *biradari* to the east. The security of their economic base and their respectability in the eyes of British officialdom enabled the Kashmiris to play a pivotal leadership role in the larger Hindu society.

The Kashmiri families who had initially made their fortunes under the Khalsa Darbar were to be found in the newly-built mansions of Lahore's Civil Lines by the end of the nineteenth century, in a geographic expression of their continued proximity to the centres of power and their individual English mentors. There was nothing equivalent in the capital of the Punjab to Lucknow's Kashmiri Muhalla, where the Pandits congregated in the narrow, winding *galis* of their forefathers. As in the Northwestern Provinces, however, the very fact that the majority of Pandits were urban residents, particularly of Lahore, meant that they were advantageously situated to profit from the new institutions of British India.

[11]Ravinder Kumar, *Essays on Gandhian Politics, The Rowlett Satyagraha of 1911* (Delhi, 1971), p. 253.

[12]Jones, *Arya Dharm*, p. 178.

[13] Ibid., p. 248. See also Barrier, 'Arya Samaj and Congress Politics', *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (May 1967) p. 367.

Of the 1,462 Pandits enumerated in the 1911 Census, 537 were found in Lahore, and 401 in Amritsar.[14] Lahore was especially generous in opportunities extended to the literate. In the years from 1881 to 1911, the population of the city grew 45.4 per cent, to a total of 228,687 in the latter year. Lahore grew 50 per cent faster at this time than the average rate of urban growth. Immigration was 'due mainly to the strengthening of the headquarter offices of government, the transfer to Lahore of the Military Accounts Department and of the headquarters of certain departments, the growth of the railway workshops, the extensive building operations and the establishment of new educational and other institutions.'[15]

The Kashmiri community of the Punjab had a generous share of the higher administrative positions in the provincial bureaucracy. The British had annexed the Punjab with far more respect for those they replaced than was the case in Avadh, and their perception of the Kashmiris as outsiders further softened their approach to those Pandits in the Darbar. English determination to make the transition a painless rather than a punishing one meant that descendants of the Kauls, the Rainas and the Madans were all looked upon favourably and were given positions as *tehsildars* and assistant commissioners well into the twentieth century.

The eldest grandson of Raja Dina Nath, Diwan Ram Nath (d. 1904) was on the provincial Darbar List, was made a Diwan Bahadur in 1896 (at which time his annual income was an estimated 16,000 rupees), and was promoted by Sir Charles Aitchison from extra assistant commissioner to a district judgeship. Two of the three great-grandchildren of the Raja, Som Nath and Gyan Nath were both extra assistant commissioners.[16] (The third, Kailash Nath, was 'mentally unsound'.) Nand Lal Tikku, descendant of the diwans under the Afghani administration of Kashmir, was likewise given several *jagirs* and made a Rai Bahadur by the British.[17]

New families also seem to have quickly moved into the Punjabi

[14] *Punjab Census*, 1911, p. 462. The author of the Census report, Hari Kishen Kaul, was a Kashmiri Brahman.

[15] Ibid., p. 24.

[16] Griffin and Massey, *Chiefs*, pp. 266-7.

[17] Shangloo interview and *History of Services*, 1916.

administration; Thakur Prasad Wanchoo came from Kashmir to Lahore just after annexation. He was employed in the Sadr Diwani Adalat and ended his career as a *tehsildar* in Jhelum.[18] Bhawani Prasad Shangloo also arrived from Kashmir at this time.[19] His son Janki Prasad (1844–1912), married the daughter of a Delhi Pandit and joined government service as a non-gazetted officer in 1867.[20] From serving as a clerk, he was promoted to superintendent of the Deputy Commissioner's Office, and was then made extra assistant commissioner. He served as Mir Munshi of the Civil Secretariat in Lahore in the 1880s (a position held by the Kashmiri Pandit Moti Lal Katju in the 1870s). and was named a Raj Bahadur in 1898.[21]

Janki Prasad was one of the main supporters of the Dharm Sabha in Lahore: he was highly orthodox in his insistence on eating food prepared only by Kashmiri Brahmin cooks, but he was not opposed to western education and helped many Kashmiri students by allowing them to stay in his house if their families resided outside Lahore.[22] His sons were all given a western education. Jawala Prasad, who was born in 1876, received his Masters from Foreman Christian College, took his law degree and was enrolled at the Lahore Chief Court as first grade pleader in 1904. (He eventually was made government prosecutor and received an O. B. E. in 1929.[23])

The grandson of Moti Lal Katju, Kishori Lal Katju, born in 1877, was likewise sent to Foreman Christian College, then studied and practised law but eventually shifted to government service and ended up as government pleader.[24]

Law practice does not seem to have been as lucrative a calling in the Punjab as it was in the Northwestern Provinces where zamindari litigation was a profitable business that went to the Kashmiris because of traditional ties between these zamindars and the Pandits whose forefathers had managed their estates in the past.[25]

[18] *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. 2, p. 424.
[19] Interview with B. P. Shangloo, Lucknow, May 1979.
[20] *History of Services*. 1894.
[21] Ibid., 1898.
[22] Interview with B.P. Shangloo.
[23] *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. 1, p. 284.
[24] Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 145.
[25] Peter Musgrave, 'Landlords and Lords of the Land: Estate Management and Social Control in U.P. 1860-1920', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. VI, No. 3, 1972.

The history of those Lahori families which appear in the *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir* presents a pattern that is either stable or upwardly mobile. This pattern contrasts with the history of many of the families of the U. P. whose heyday lay in the early or mid-nineteenth century but whose fortunes were already on the wane by the turn of the century.

The Wali family exemplifies the pattern typical of the Pandits of Lahore of this time. Bal Kishen was the first to appear in the Punjab; his son Gopi Kishen secured a minor position in the jail administration (another Pandit enclave). Gopi Kishen had two sons, Inder Kishen and Manmohan Kishen.[26] Inder Kishen was born in 1891, joined government employment in 1915, and by 1921 was a *munsif*.[27] His younger brother was born six years later, took his Bachelor's degree from Foreman Christian College and then studied law. At the time of his death in 1929, he was judicial secretary in the state of Suket.[28]

The family was active in the affairs of the community, but does not seem to have influenced them greatly. The two brothers wrote a fifty-page essay: 'The Social Survey of the Kashmiri Pandits' which they published in 1916. The 'survey' was, in fact, a plea for unity between the two warring factions of the community, but from the onset the Walis adopted an apologetic tone, both for their ideas and the lack of consultation with leaders of the community. 'They are sorry they have not been able to approach any leading gentlemen for having the recorded views approved upon.[29]

The 'Social Survey' was regarded by its authors as a moderate document. 'The idea is to show the necessity for a spirit of moderation in social practice.'[30] A description of the Dharm Sabhite or orthodox position was followed by a description of the 'Plea of the Liberal', after which the Walis dedicated themselves to a discussion of the 'The Golden Mean', and some suggestions which were largely compromises between the two positions. Yet what strikes the reader is the exceptionally conservative tone of the work and the preoccupation with religion. This concern reflects the extent to which the Kashmiris identified with the provincial Hindu culture, in contrast with members of the community

[26] *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. 1, P. 447.

[27] *History of Services*, 1915 and 1921.

[28] M.K.K. and I.K.K. Wali, *A Social Survey of the Kashmiri Pandits* (Lahore, 1916), p. iii.

[29] Ibid., p. i.

[30] Ibid., p. iii.

in Avadh and the Northwestern Provinces. The plea for unity within the community ranks is less clear, in fact, than the plea for the priority of conservative religious concerns. It is Hinduism rather than the Kashmiri identity that is being defended and defined. Thus, the first few pages of the work quote various European sources 'to show the ancient glory of Hinduism and create in the Hindu mind love for Hindu ideals, literature, and form of worship. It might serve to open the eyes of that Westernized Hindu who hardly cares to take to the embodied wisdom of his own literature.'[31]

The brothers portrayed the programme of the 'liberal' (a liberal is defined as someone 'who has allowed his religious faith and social life to be governed by western learning and contact') as a reasonable demand for simplified ritual, reduced expense, later marriages, and a larger spirit.[32] Their sympathies, however, lay with the 'Conservatives'. 'It is not unreasonable to hold the Conservative's mode of life is natural, economic and convenient. The commandments of his religion are full of sense discernible to the initiated only.'[33]

Inder Kishen and Manmohan Kishen conceded the necessity for some reform. They favoured, for example, a reduction of restrictions on interdining with other Brahmans. 'Separate dining has ceased to be conveniently practicable for the ordinary man of the world who now finds the door of new prospects opened to him.'[34] They also believed that a Kashmiri Brahman cook was unnecessary, as long as he was to be replaced by an Indian Brahman cook, principally because of the 'eccentricity and scarcity' of Kashmiri cooks and the great expense of their service. Similarly, the Walis advocated some female education because a wife could only help her husband if she was educated.

But the major problem within the community, according to the authors, was the growth of materialism. 'It is one thing to secure high government offices and another to acquit oneself credibly in private life... Our national signs are gradually disappearing. Mutual regard is being sacrificed at the altar of Mammon.'[35]

The defense against dissolution of community identity was based on religious principles, the sanctity of the ancestral line. The

[31]Ibid., p. iii.

[32]Ibid., p. iv. [33]Ibid., p. 24. [34]Wali, *Social Survey*, p. 32.
[35]Ibid., pp. 34, 36, 44.

ultimate purpose of life, according to the Pandits, was religion. Like the Conservative archetype they presented, the two Walis believed, ultimately, that 'a sound religion ever survives while nations do sink.'[36] The Wali interpretation of the Kashmiri tradition and the direction in which the community should move was typical of the sentiments which prevailed within the community in the Punjab and reflected the needs and beliefs of its largely middle-class members.

On matters of social impact, the Lahori Pandits were more progressive than members of the *biradari* in U. P. They were far more willing to reduce expense, simplify ritual, and do away with Kashmiri cooks. If education was becoming a more effective vehicle of mobility than marriage, the Pandits were amenable to taking their wealth and directing it towards education rather than towards dowry. Social norms, which advanced thrift rather than consumption and display, thus found a more receptive audience in the Punjab than in Avadh. But on matters of fundamental religious belief, the Pandits of the Punjab were much less inclined to consider change. Thus they parallelled the reforms espoused by the Arya Samaj on social questions, but diverged significantly on religious questions.

The Kashmiris were firmly committed to the belief in idolatry. In their essay, Inder Kishen and Manmohan Kishen devoted several pages to a defence of idolatry by citing western authorities; they also defended the worship of rivers, the *pipal* tree, and the leaves of the *tulsi* plant.

The Kashmiri form of Hinduism with its elements of Tantricism was easier to reconcile with Sanatan Dharm religion than Arya Samaji Hinduism. Traditional Hinduism was an amorphous body of beliefs, whereas the very Arya effort to define religion was narrowing. Arya Samaj religion was 'modern' in its advocacy of monotheism and social virtue but was far less flexible than the Sanatan Dharm approach simply because it did attempt to define religion.

The Kashmiri formula which combined socially progressive elements with an orthodox approach to religion was a viable formula for the community as it embarked on a largely middle-class career and lifestyle. The formula bestowed both a sense of worth and a

[36]Ibid., p. 20.

sense of continuity on the members of the community at a time of rapid social change.

The Kashmiri Pandits of U. P. responded differently in part because they were not as evenly affected by the changes. Modernization seemed to have been far more divisive for them than for Kashmiris in the Punjab. The Pandits of Lucknow adhered more firmly to the traditional symbols of status within the community: the Kashmiri cooks, the extravagant dowries, the wasteful ceremonial rituals. But for the most part, religion remained a matter of private practice, and mastery of Sanskrit was more worthy of respect than emulation in Avadh and the Northwestern Provinces.

The Kashmiri Brahmans of Lahore retained the positions in the administration to which they had traditionally aspired and were successful, as well, in securing an early foothold in the most promising new areas; particularly in the Public Works Department. The community was thus able to use the apparatus of English administration to expand its position in the larger Punjabi society.

In 1855, a separate central Public Works Department had been established. Prior to that time, each area had its own arrangement. In the Punjab, both the irrigation and railway departments grew rapidly, although it was not until 1905 that a Railroad Board replaced the railway branch of the P.W.D.[37] The growth of the railway bureaucracy had an immediate impact on service opportunities at all levels in Lahore. The *District Gazetteer* credited the growth of the railway and public works department for the increased population of the city; at this time, however, the railway was a mere skeleton of its eventual size, encompassing only 144 miles, linking Amritsar, Lahore and Multan.[38] The railway workshops, established to the east of the old city, in Mughalpura, employed 2,000 of the city's residents; 25 years later, the workshops employed 8,270 labourers, while headquarters and the railway station accounted for 4,000 jobs.[39] Of a total population of 228,687, the railway supported almost 31,000. Most of these jobs were low-paying

[37]B. B. Misra, *Administrative History of India 1834-1947* (Delhi, 1970) pp. 109, 125.

[38]*Lahore District Gazetter*, 1883–84, p. 43.

[39]Ibid., pp. 103–94.

construction jobs. There were only 22 Indian officers receiving more than 75 rupees monthly, and 476 receiving between 20 rupees and 75 rupees,[40] but the Kashmiris were firmly entrenched at the top of this pyramid.

The first Kashmiris to have been associated with the Public Works Department seem to have been Prem Nath Thussu and Bashesar Nath Kaul. Prem Nath joined the Department as an accountant in the lowest grade following his graduation from Government College in Lahore in 1867. By 1875, he had advanced from the fourth to the first grade in the subordinate accounts establishment. By 1887, when he appeared before the Public Service Commission, Prem Nath was the only native Indian to serve as a full examiner in the Superior Accounts Establishment. He was made a Rai Bahadur in 1891.[41] Basheshwar Nath Kaul, who was born in 1846, joined the Public Works Department two years after Prem Nath, as head clerk in the engineers' office of the then Rajputana Railway. He returned to the Punjab in 1877 as paymaster of the Punjab Northern States Railway, was promoted rapidly and eventually became the first Indian Railway District Traffic Superintendent.[42]

The Pandits who pioneered the Kashmiri stake in the Public Works Department came both from families of relatively obscure origins such as the family of Prem Nath and families whose history in the plains was long and illustrious. Manohar Nath Zutshi, an assistant examiner of accounts born in 1849, could trace his geneaology in the plains back six generations, to one Lakshmi Nath who had been a tutor to one of the noble families in Karnal. Several of Lakshmi Narain's descendants were notable poets, associated with the Mughal court and living in Delhi's Bazar Sita Ram, among them Rai Rayan Sita Ram Kashmiri, a contemporary of Arzu (*c.* 1780). Manohar Nath, the son of one Sham Nath Zutshi, joined the Public Works Department in 1874. His only brother Prithvi Nath went into the police department in Delhi, and then shifted to service in Patiala. One of Manohar Lal's sons became a *munsif* and then a district and sessions judge, and was made a Rai

[40] *Punjab Census*, 1911, p. 511.

[41] *Public Service Commission*, 1887, Testimony of the Public Works Department, p. 96, *History of Government college*, p. 10, *Public Works Department, History of Services.1901*, p. 126.

[42] *History of the Services of the Officers of the Engr. Accts., St. RR to Dec. 1884.*

Bahadur. After his retirement he became the judicial member of Nabha State through the recommendation of Ganga Ram Kaul. The other son, Tribhuvan Nath, was given in adoption to Manohar Nath's childless brother, Prithvi Nath, and grew up in Bazar Sita Ram, where he was educated in the traditional manner in a *maktab* and became a disciple of Dagh. He went to Oriental College in Lahore to polish his Persian and then to Government College to study English. Tribhuvan Nath finally obtained a job in the accounts department through Manohar Lal, and married the daughter of Bishember Nath Kaul, another Pandit in the Public Works Department administration.[43]

Har Prasad Dar was a member of another highly-placed Pandit family; his father Debi Prasad was a Punjabi *tehsildar* who had served the British faithfully in the 1857 Rising. Following the Rising,Debi Prasad moved his family to Lucknow where he started a press that was patronized by the British and which he eventually sold to Nawal Kishore. Both Har Prasad and his brother Kashi Prasad joined government service. Kashi Prasad took his FA from Lahore, then was given a post in the Jail Department (another Pandit enclave), and eventually was sent to Alwar where he came to be Superintendent of Jails and Judicial Minister. He received a Rai Sahibship on retiring. Har Prasad joined the Eastern Bengal State Railway and worked his way rapidly through the ranks, finally becoming chief examiner of accounts back in Lahore.[44] The Dars were leaders of the progressive movement among the Pandits of Lahore; Kashi Prasad was involved with the publication of the *Kashmiri Prakash* during its brief existence in 1901 under the editorship of Mankameshwar Nath Madan.

The *History of Services* contains the names of numerous Kashmiris concentrated in the audit and accounts section of the Northwestern Railway, and the two Kashmiris who are remembered as having helped the most members of the community were both in the railway;[45] Ganga Ram Kaul, who was born in 1877 and was made a deputy examiner of accounts in 1901, and Jiwan Lal Kaul

[43]Kaul, *The Kashmiri Pandit*, p. 69; *History of Services Railway Branch*, 1905; interview with R. M. N. Zutshi, Delhi, August 1979; Sprenger, *Catalogue*, p. 296; *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. 1, p. 360.

[44]Interview with Ashok Dar, Allahabad, May 1979. *Manual of Titles*, Oudh and Northwestern Provinces; *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. 1, p. 712.

[45]Interviews with R. M. N. Zutshi, P. K. Kaul, J. K. Kitchloo, and G. N. Handoo.

who became secretary of the Railway Board in Delhi, and died quite young in Delhi in the early twenties.[46] Kashmiri success seems to have been due both to the early Kashmiri connections within the department, and performance in the competitive exams. In the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, the P. W. D. bureaucracy expanded so rapidly the Kashmiris at the apex could expend their efforts for members of the community who were not relatives, thereby contributing to an image of these years among the community as its golden age.

The appointment of Ram Narain in 1885 as the first native to be named to the Chief Court in Lahore seemed to symbolize both the Punjabi and Kashmiri community's success and its felt vulnerabilities. Ram Narain Dar was a graduate of Government College in Lahore. His first post was as a clerk in the Department of Public Instruction on a monthly salary of 80 rupees. He was enrolled as pleader in 1879 and maintained a respectable practice before being nominated to serve as officiating Judge in the Chief Court by Sir Charles Aitchison.[47]

The appointment had a mixed response. A public meeting was held on the premise of the Tribune Press 'to thank the Government for the appointment of a Native Judge.' 'Such an influential and representative gathering in such a cause was never before held in Lahore,' wrote the *Tribune* correspondent.[48] Pandit Maharaj Kishen Ghamkhwar issued a supplement lithographed in letters of gold in honour of the occasion, acclaimed the nomination 'a new feather in the cap of the Kashmiri Brahmins', and hailed Aitchison as a 'Naushirwan'[49] after the Persian hero. The *Rafiq-i-Hind*, the *Koh-i-nur* and the *Reformer of Lahore* all noted that the Pandit was one of the best qualified while the *Reformer* added that his speedy elevation was due primarily to agitation in the press.[50]

Opposition to the appointment came from the Anglo-Indian press and was based on the fact that, in fact, the Pandit was not a

[46]See eulogistic poem in *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir* on Kaul's death, by Manmohan Kishen Wali, Vol. 2, p. 808.

[47]*Pioneer*, 13 Oct. 1885 quoted in *Tribune*, 17 Oct. 1885, p. 4.

[48]*Tribune*, 19 Sept. 1885, supplement.

[49]*Selections from the Vernacular Press*, 1885, *Ghamkhwar-i-Hind*, 12 Sept., p. 642.

[50]Ibid., *Rafiq-i-Hind*, 12 Sept.; *Koh-i-nur*, 10 Sept.; *Reformer*, 12 Sept., pp. 642–3.

'native' but a Kashmiri. The *Pioneer* led the ranks of the critics, causing the *Tribune*,the *Rafiq-i-Hind* and the *Shafiq-i-Hind* to come to Ram Narain's defence. The *Pioneer* writes, said the *Rafiq* in late September, that the Pandit 'is not generally considered a native of the Punjab. This is a downright falsehood. As regards to objection that he is Kashmiri, it should be observed that he was born and educated at Lahore. Hence, at least, he is more native than the Europeans.'[51] The *Tribune* accused the editors of the *Civil and Military Gazette* of adopting 'the maxim, like a majority of Anglo-Indians,[of], 'divide et impera' by claiming that the Bengali barristers were dissatisfied with the appointment.' 'This', noted the *Tribune* 'was a most unmitigated falsehood as the Bengali pleaders have one and all hailed the appointment.'[52] 'Another objection urged against him', observed the *Rafiq-i-Hind*, 'is that he does not belong to a high family. Are all European officers in this country of royal descent ? The less said of the families of many European Officers the better.'[53]

The response to Ram Narain's 'speedy elevation' as that of an outsider corresponded to the Kashmiris' own self perceptions. The native press of the Punjab had adopted the Kashmiris in order to advance nationalist claims, as the Hindu press had adopted them to advance communalist claims, but the Kashmiris' own image of themselves as reflected in the community journals, was far closer to that presented by the Anglo-Indian press than the vernacular. Rising consciousness of an Indian identity and a larger Hindu identity may have diminished others' perception of the Kashmiris as foreigners, but it did not diminish their own sense of distance.

The population of Amritsar increased at an uneven rate; periodically the city was plagued by outbreaks of malaria. From 1881 to 1891 the population declined by 10 per cent. The following decade however, its numbers swelled by 18 per cent, bringing the total number of residents to 161,039. The Deputy Commissioner attributed this growth to the development of the carpet industry, factories involved with processing wool and cotton, and the existence

[51]Ibid., *Rafiq-i-Hind*, 26 Sep. p. 682.
[52]*Tribune*, 17 Oct. 1885, p. 4.
[53]*Selections from the Vernacular Press*, *Rafiq-i-Hind*, 26 Sept., p. 682.

of a trade market for foodgrains.[54] From 1901 to 1911, the population was once more reduced by the ravages of disease, 46,000 residents of the city contracted malaria and died during the decade.[55] In 1911 three-quarters of the city's population was said to have been born locally, and most visitors were pilgrims drawn by the golden temple. According to the Census, 'silk weaving and spinning, wool carding, spinning, and weaving, dyeing etc. of textiles are the main industries ...and the strongest occupation of this city is trade.'[56]

Amritsar was not the cosmopolitan centre that Lahore was. In 1881 more of its people had been born out of the district than thirty years later. It was not culturally diverse. The *District Gazetteer* noted of the city that 'the only relics of Mohammadan rule which need be mentioned are the remains of the imperial caravanserais ... the history of Amritsar is linked almost exclusively with the Sikhs, which became their religious capital during the reign of Ranjit Singh.' Administratively, for most of its history, Amritsar was part of Lahore division.[57]

Most of the Kashmiris of Amritsar at the end of the nineteenth century had arrived there; they were not born there. Still, they were well integrated into middle-class Punjabi Hindu society, influenced more by the general trends than their own community traditions. The Pandits of Amritsar were a more homogeneous group than those of most Kashmiri enclaves.

While most community meetings were held at the home of their leading local member (in Allahabad at the home of Sapru, in Lucknow at the newly constructed residence of Jagat Narain Mulla, in Lahore at Raja Narendra Nath's), the Pandits of Amritsar had no acknowledged leader whose residence was the focus of communal gatherings and whose views dominated those of other members of the local community. By 1910, the Kashmiris of Amritsar had collectively built their own temple, 'Bhat Ku', and it was there that the *biradari* assembled.

One of the first Kashmiri families to settle in Amritsar was the Kitchloo family. The family traced its ancestry back to one Atma Ram, who left Kashmir as part of the Mughal army. In 1680,

[54] *Census Punjab*, 1911, p. 24.
[55] Ibid., 1901, p. 16.
[56] Ibid., 1911, p. 25.
[57] *District Gazeteer Amritsar District*, H. D. Craik (Lahore, 1914, pp. 108, 8.

according to the family *panda* in Allahabad, the Kashmiri soldier inscribed his name in the books of the priest. One of Atma Ram's descendants, Lakshmi Narain, had three sons all of whom became government servants. Of the first, Jai Narain, nothing is known. The second son of Lakshmi Narain, Bihari Lal (d. 1898), made the family fortunes. He served the British in the northwest of India, and was on one occasion sent to Kabul. After settling in the Punjab he called for his younger brother, Bakht Narain, who became an extra assistant Judicial Commissioner.

Bihari Lal was one of the most prosperous Pandits of the city. He built a home so enormous it was known as Kitchloo Castle; he undertook numerous charitable activities such as the construction of a public well, and became president of the local Hindu Sabha. Four of the five sons of Bihari Lal became government servants, Manohar Lal, Sri Kishen, and Hari Kishen were all *tehsildars*. But the Kashmiris of Amritsar were generally less conspicuous than Bihari Lal. They tended to be middle class, well assimilated into the larger Punjabi Hindu society, and, as products of the western educational system, progressive in their view of community affairs. When the Bishen Sabha sent a delegation to Amritsar to generate support for Bishen Narain Dar, the group was given one of its most sympathetic receptions by the Pandits of Amritsar. They overwhelmingly signed the register of support for the foreign-returned Pandit.[58]

By the beginning of the twentieth century those Pandits who formed the nucleus of the Amritsar community were a group of professionals, largely educationalists and lawyers. They included Bishen Narain Razdan who hosted the committee which welcomed the Bishen Sabha delegates to the city, Brij Mohan Lal Tikku, Arjun Nath Matoo, Bishember Nath Razdan, Sarup Narain Razdan, and Dr. Shiv Narain Razdan. All combined progressive attitudes as regarded internal community affairs with a strong public involvement with orthodox Hindu religion.

Brij Mohan Lal Tikku was born to Niranjan Nath Tikoo, a *munsif*, in 1880. He obtained his Bachelor's degree from Foreman Christian College and his teaching certificate from Central Training College. He then went to Amritsar, where he became

[58]Interview with J.K. Kitchloo, Punjab Civil List; *Safir-i-Kashmir* (Nov.-Dec. 1892);

headmaster of the Hindu Sabha High School.[59] Arjun Nath Matoo was born to Kashmiri Mal, a local *vakil*, the year after Tikkoo. He was one of the first Pandits whose education reflected the new values of the Kashmiris; Arjun Nath studied Sanskrit rather than Persian at Government College. In 1905, the Pandit was employed by the Khalsa College of Amritsar to teach its students Sanskrit.[60] Sarup Narain Razdan was born in Delhi in 1878 to Bishen Narain Razdan,who was in the British service and was transferred to Amritsar when his son was four years of age. Sarup Narain graduated from Punjab University in 1899, after which he went into business. Like the other leaders of the Amritsar Pandits, Sarup Narain had a religious bent; his principal crusade was against alcohol. In 1911, he was the Amritsar representative to the World Temperance Conference in England. He was also an active participant in the Indian National Congress and was jailed in 1919—but he was attracted to the Congress more out of religious than secular concerns.[61]

The Pandits of Amritsar were strongly reformist in regard to internal community affairs. Their actions within the Kashmiri association were progressive; they favoured a reduction of expenses, an enlightened education, and an end to child marriage. Their views in social matters tended to parallel the Arya Samaj philosophy. However, in matters of general Hindu religion, they were found far more in Sanatan Dharm organizations, with their traditionalist orientation, than in the Arya Samaj. The Pandits in Amritsar were characterized by a combination of western education and religious affirmation.

[59] *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. 1, p. 716.
[60] Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 506.
[61] Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 94.

CHAPTER XVII

# The U. P. in the Early Twentieth Century

In the beginning of company rule, the law courts of the NWP & O perpetuated the Persian cultural affiliations which had originated in the Mughal court. The shift from Persian to Urdu in 1839 as the official language did not alter the monopoly by Persian literates of the court system; recruitment remained confined to the traditional élite, and was, as Buckee noted, 'the only thing (which) united the mixed body of pleaders.'[1]

By 1865, there were two grades of legal practitioners at Agra, the British advocates and the *vakils*. These, it was decided the following year, would henceforth be required to learn English judicial procedures and English language. The decision to introduce English into the court system made it more likely that local Brahmins and other Hindus would participate in the legal system and break the hold of the Persian and Urdu-speaking service élite upon it. Courts would no longer be the province of those who were seen to be associated with (or tainted by) an Islamicate culture.

Other factors tended to further weaken the traditional class of legal practitioners. Originally, 'the essence of civil practice lay in establishing links with the zamindars in the mufussil.'[2] The zamindars, of course, were part of the same cultural network as the service élite. Members of the latter now managed their employers' litigation as once they had managed their estates. As long as most litigation was initiated by the zamindars, the advantage in legal practice lay with those whose families had enjoyed a long history of relations with landholders. Buckee remarked upon the *jajmani-*

[1]G. F. M. Buckee,'An Examination of the Development and Structure of the Legal Profession at Allahabad 1866-1935', PHD thesis,London University, 1972, pp. 1–46.

[2]Ibid., pp. 247–8.

like quality in the relationship between the lawyer and his client and the extent to which the connection between the two was a personal and permanent one. Without connections, she concluded, it was difficult to establish a successful legal practice. The fact that litigation was generally initiated by a limited group and that legal practitioners tended to take in only family and kin as apprentices, meant that the legal world became effectively the monopoly of just a few cliques.[3] Later, however, under the aegis of the imperial institutions, alternative routes to legal practice were established, eroding the initial advantages of those with close ties to the traditional zamindari class.

Following the shift to a more anglicized legal environment, the shortage of native *vakils* tended to be met by those of the old service group who were educated in English. Typically, according to Buckee, they 'tended to be representatives of the minority groups who could not afford to allow themselves to fall behind.'[4]

Kashmiri Brahmans were among the most successful in weathering these changes. They were able to succeed because of the community's commitment to education and to internal solidarity. 'Beginning in the 1850s, the Kunzrus, Chaks and Nehrus, familiar with both Persian-Urdu and English, formed a connecting link bridging the period of linguistic change in the superior courts.'[5] Internal patronage and mutual aid perpetuated the Kashmiris' advantageous initial position.

Although the Kashmiris adapted to changing conditions, they found themselves in very different company as they did so. At first, fellow practitioners tended to be representatives of the same cultural world as the Pandits. (The first Indian judge of the High Court was Syed Mahmud, the son of Sir Saiyid Ahmad Khan.) Gradually, however, the social composition of the practitioners changed. Local Brahmans, Nagar Brahmans originally from Gujarat, and Vaisyas began to make an appearance in Allahabad, bringing with them a more traditional Hindu and Sanskritic realm of concerns. The shift was symbolized by the prominence of Madan Mohan Malaviya, an orthodox Malawi Brahman who 'popularized law to the Hindu population and anticipated the swing from an English–Urdu cultural heritage of the law toward the dominant ethos of Eastern Uttar Pradesh.'[6]

[3]Ibid., p. 215.
[4]Ibid., p. 189.
[5]Ibid., p. 186.
[6]Ibid., p. 179.

The first generation of Kashmiris at the High Court Bar in Allahabad personified the continuity between Mughal culture and its successor. Ajudhia Nath Kunzru built an astonishingly successful practice upon traditional foundations. Two generations later, these foundations were eroded and in the court, as elsewhere in society, the links between Muslim and Hindu participants in the Persian- and Urdu-speaking service élite were being severed as new social groups came to occupy places in what had been exclusively the world of the old literate elite.

The Kunzru family took its name from Kunjargaon, the village in Baramula district to the west of Srinagar which the family held in *jagir*. In 1760, members of the family, led by Ajudhia Nath's grandfather Kripa Ram, departed from Kashmir.[7] In a manuscript written by the migrant, instability was given as the reason for the departure—this was the time when the Afghans acquired Kashmir, and the Kunzrus were one of many families to leave. According to Kripa Ram, the family's first destination was Faizabad, but ultimately the Kunzrus settled in the Bazar Sita Ram in Delhi. Shortly after Lake occupied the city in 1803, Kripa Ram's brother, Ganesh Pandit, became *vakil* to the East India Company, while Kripa Ram himself went to Agra. There, Kripa Ram's son, Kedar Nath, founded the mercantile firm Kedarnath Ajudhianath, acquired land, and built an imposing residence in Agra's Maharani Tola in 1840, the year of Ajudhia Nath's birth.[8] In addition to managing his various mercantile enterprises, Kedar Nath was made Diwan of Jhajjar, one of the small principalities in the vicinity of Delhi.

Ajudhia Nath was born, brought up, and educated in Agra. As a youngster he studied Arabic and Persian. In 1853 he was sent to Agra College to receive instruction in English. By 1861, he was practising law at the district court, and two years later made his debut at the Sadar Dewani Adalat.[9] In 1866 this court became the High Court and when it was transferred to Allahabad in 1867–8, Kunzru was part of the Kashmiri Brahman contingent (which included Saprus and Nehrus) following in its train. By 1880, his

[7]Interview with Gopi Nath Kunzru, the last surviving son of Ajudhia Nath, Allahabad, April 1979.

[8]Moti Lal Bhargawa, *First Martyr to Constitutional Freedom, Pandit Ajudhia Nath* (Allahabad, 1978), p. 2.

[9]Public Service Commission, *Evidence for the Northwestern Provinces and Oudh*, Testimony of Ajudhia Nath Kunzru.

practice was so successful that his income was estimated to be 80,000 rupees annually, derived principally from lucrative zamindari litigation.[10]

Family connections secured through mercantile activities contributed to the flourishing legal practice. Kunzru owed his fortune to the zamindars of Agra. His flawless command of Arabic and Persian were further enticements for wealthy Muslim landholders. Ajudhia Nath did not neglect his other enterprises, however. At the time of his death in 1892, Kunzru's banking and commission agencies had branches in Agra, Allahabad, Calcutta, Partapgarh and Basti.[11]

Ajudhia Nath's environment, both private and professional, was dominated by the cross-communal Mughal tradition. Publicly, many of his endeavours were designed to perpetuate the existence of the traditional Urdu-speaking service class. He participated, along with Muslims of similar background, in those institutions dedicated to the literary traditions of the service élite, such as the *Rifah-i-am* and the *Jalsa-i-Tahzib* in Lucknow. He nurtured the legal careers of Nawab Abdul Majid and Saiyid Abdul Rauf as well as those of members of the Kashmiri Pandit community.[12].

Ajudhia Nath hesitated to join the Indian National Congress because of its dominance by the Bengalis he disliked so intensely, but when he finally did join in 1888, he strove to bring into it the traditional service class.[13] The difficulties he faced in trying to secure a cross-communal Congress stance were to prove prophetic. Part of Ajudhia Nath's problem was that Saiyid Ahmad Khan was opposed to the Congress movement and to criticize his stance was to appear anti-Muslim rather than anti-loyalist. But generally, Ajudhia Nath was attacked by those who favoured communalist rather than cross-communal forms of political organization.

[10]*National Biography for India* p. 332.

[11]Interview with Gopi Nath Kunzru, Minors of Ajudhia Nath, Home Judicial B, June, 1892, pp. 258–9, citied in Bharagava, p. 5. *Pandit Ajudhia Nath,*

[12]Interview with Gopi Nath Kunzru.

[13]'The one consideration which more especially induced me to join the Congress was that in my opinion it was the most likely institution to promote friendly feeling and an ever developing unity between the different races domiciled in the country' he told delegates to the 5th Annual Meeting of the Congress. *(Report of the 5th Indian National Congress held at Bombay 26-8 December 1889*, p. 56.

In 1888, Ajudhia Nath began a series of speaking tours in his home province in support of the Congress. When he appeared in Lucknow, for example, he quoted several times from the Quran in an appeal for tolerance, but this appeal was ignored and there was almost a riot as thousands of 'butchers, weavers, and other such low classes as attended under the idea that the meeting would declare a remission of the income tax, defend cow killing, proclaim a jihad against Hindus and so forth', stormed the premises of the *Rifah-i-am*, despite the pleas of the chairman of the meeting, Sheikh Reza Husain Khan.[14]

Almost all the Pandit's speeches dwelt on the commonality of interests between Muslim and Hindu and stressed Ajudhia Nath's personal connections with Muslims.[15] Seconding a resolution that proposed that no subject be discussed by the Congress which either Hindus or Muslims opposed, Kunzru stated, 'It is specially for the satisfaction of those with whom I have spent the greater portion of my life and with whom I am wholly in sympathy that this resolution is designed.'[16] The next year in Bombay, he noted that he was returned as delegate to the Congress both by Allahabad and the Muslims of Bombay. He went on to declare, 'If there is a Hindu who has been associated on terms of perfect friendship with Mohammedans, it is I. I can count among their number, gentlemen with whom I am on the most friendly terms and who regard me as amongst their best friends.'[17]

Most of those Muslims who did participate in the Congress movement were in fact members of the Urdu service élite. 'The only Muslims of Lucknow who are in favour of the Congress are Mr. Hamid Ali Khan, Mr [Mahomed] Rafiq, Mr. Syed Nabiullah, Sheikh Reza Husain, and the editors of the Oudh Punch and the Jubilee Paper', wrote the Lucknow correspondent of the Kanpur

[14]SUP, 1888, p.

[15]See, for example, *The Tribune*, April 14 1888 and Jan. 9 1889.Wrote The *Tribune* correspondent, 'He had read more Muslim literature than his own and when he delivered his last speech in Lucknow, his friends said he had turned a Muslim. He would turn Muslim if he thought it was his duty.' (One of Kunzru's sons is said to have converted to Islam and married a Muslim girl. Interview with Mrs J. K. Kitchloo, Delhi, August 1979).

[16]Bhargava, *Pandit Ajudhia Nath*, p. 77.

[17]*Report of the Fifth Indian National Congress held at Bombay, 26, 27, & 28 December, 1889*, p. 56.

*Alam-i-Taswir* in May of 1887.[18] Surveying the delegate list for the 1888 Congress, of which Kunzru was Chairman of the Reception Committee, Francis Robinson notes, 'From the Lucknow Congress Circle there came most of the Urdu-speaking élite of the Nawabi city and the chief towns of Oudh, elected by public meetings and associations such as the *Rifah-i-am* and the *Jalsa-i-Tahzib*.'[19]

These Muslims were from the same world as Ajudhia Nath. Syed Nabiullah, for example, was a graduate of Aligarh who settled in Lucknow, where he participated, along with the Kashmiri, in the activities of the *Rifah* and the *Jalsa*.[20] Hamid Ali Khan organized the opposition of Urdu speakers to the Nagri Resolution, as Ajudhia Nath fought for the retention of Urdu law classes at Muir Central College when these were threatened. Rarely did Ajudhia Nath make a speech in Lucknow in which he was not accompanied by Sheikh Reza Husain, the president of the *Rifah-i-am*.

While Ajudhia Nath Kunzru's biographer exaggerates the importance of his subject in securing the participation of Muslims, it is probable that Muslim members of the service élite could most closely identify with those Hindus such as Kunzru who shared that tradition.

In 1893, the year after Kunzru died, another of the Pandit community's most illustrious members retired from public life. Bishember Nath Sahib, like Ajudhia Nath, was a product of the cross-communal tradition of the Mughal court and was equally dedicated to a broad secularity in public life. Privately, he was extremely orthodox, however, and because his orthodox disposition was well known he was highly regarded by the local Hindu population. Both facets of his character were important elements in his persona. These contradictory elements in his nature shaped the differing hopes and expectations which came to be focused upon him.

[18]Native Newspaper Reports, 1887, *Alam-i-Taswir*, 25 May 1887, p. 340.

[19]Francis Robinson, *Separatism Among Indian Muslims: the Politics of the United Provinces Muslims 1860-1923*, (Cambridge, 1979), p. 115.

[20]Ibid.

Bishember Nath was born in Delhi, where his father, Badri Nath, was an official in the Department of Permits in 1832. The family had a long tradition of service; Bishember Nath's grandfather Sada Sukh had been a revenue commissioner in Hyderabad.[21]

In his obituary for Bishember Nath, Tej Bahadur Sapru evoked the Delhi into which the Pandit was born, a city which 'was the home and refuge of a culture and civilization. He also recalled the sort of training that was standard fare in the courtly environment, a training designed to make 'a finished courtier, a polished conversationalist and a peaceful writer of poetry and prose. Until he was eleven, Bishember Nath was educated in a Delhi *maktab* in Persian and Arabic. In 1843, 'Pandit Ganga Dhar, the father of Mohan Lal Nehru, and Pandit Radha Kishen, the present writer's grandfather, were also reading in the [Delhi] College and they induced the parents of Bishember Nath to send him to the college'.[22]

Sahib spent his first three years in the Oriental Department of the school and then switched to English, much to the fury of his *maulvi*.[23] While at the College, he was part of a relatively large Kashmiri group which included Moti Lal Katju, Dharm Narain Haksar, Sarup Narain Haksar and Ram Kishen.

In 1853, the district judge of Arrah (in Bihar) wrote to the principal of the Delhi College requesting a translator. Bishember Nath was selected. Bishember Nath formed a close relationship with the judge (one more Pandit to conform to this pattern); he stayed with the judge (and read Shakespeare with him) until 1856, when his father's death brought him to Agra, where he was when the 1857 Rising broke out.[24]

Bishember Nath was made a *bakshi* of the *kotwali* in Agra by the shorthanded British, a position he exchanged for that of Bench Reader in the Sadr Dewani Adalat almost immediately.[25] In 1859, he passed the legal exam after private study and was enrolled as a *vakil*, joining Nand Lal Nehru and Kunzru. When the High Court was transferred to Allahabad, Bishember Nath relocated there as well.

[21] *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. 1, P. 573.
[22] *Indian People*, 11Aug. 1907, pp. 2, 3.
[23] *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. 1, p. 573.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid.

Bishember Nath was widely perceived as Ajudhia Nath's replacement following the latter's death.[26] 'I am grievously sad to miss from amongst us that noble patriot ... into whose shoes I have been constrained, against my own will, to step by an unfortunate devolution of melancholy succession.'[27] He was made chairman of the reception committee for the Congress meeting in Allahabad in 1892, a position originally assigned to Kunzru, and was named to Kunzru's seat in the provincial Legislative Council.

Bishember Nath, like Ajudhia Nath, was heir to the Mughal legacy and was regarded by Muslims with far less suspicion than was accorded most Hindus.[28] Upon his nomination to the Imperial Council, the *Punjabi Observer* noted that he was 'the only member believed (by Muslims) to be of equal mind on questions of race. Mr. Syed Mahmud retired in favour of the Pandit, saying 'the Pandit looks to the interests of all regardless of race.'[29] In noting the fact that, under Sir Anthony MacDonnell, numerous Muslims had been rejected from provincial service, the newspaper continued, 'the present is an instance of government prejudice and if the Pandit does not take it up ... it will afford grounds for the belief that nothing can be expected from Hindus for Muslims.'

In matters of internal community standards, Bishember Nath was not as broadminded as he was in his public stance. He was rigidly orthodox in his lifestyle and used his considerable prestige to thwart rather than to facilitate change within the Pandit community.

In 1903, for example, Bishember Nath was asked to preside over the annual community conference by reformers who thought that his consent implied support of their goals. According to an anonymous article which appeared in the *Indian People*, however, the Pandit told the 100 Kashmiris in attendance that 'It is only when the entire body are bent on reforming themselves that social reform should be thought of. Until this millennium will dawn on this

[26]See for example, *Indian People*, 20 March 1903.

[27]Bhargava, *Pandit Ajudhia Nath*, p. 122.

[28]'I have ever since my youth been associated with the élite of the Muslim community in my part of the country and it is still my enviable good fortune to enjoy the confidence of almost all its representative men in Upper India,' Bishember Nath informed delegates to the 1896 Congress in Calcutta.(*Report of the 12th Indian National Congress held at Calcutta, 1896*, p. 16.

[29]*Punjabi Observer*, 17 April 1897. MacDonnell Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford.

happy land, it is the solemn obligation of one and all to live as our great-grandfathers did.'

The article submitted to the *Indian People* concluded with a denunciation of Bishember Nath: 'He could easily have set an example of straightforwardness by declining to preside over the Conference.'[30]

The next issue of the newspaper carried a denunciation of *this* account, by Sapru, who was greatly alarmed, as Pandits always were, by the publicity given to community divisions. He pointed out 'that Pandit Bishember Nath was not prepared to go the whole length with the younger section of the community is true, but it is also true that he had a sympathetic word to say of not a few reforms advocated by the younger generation.'[31]

Sapru also defended the resolutions the Conference did pass in words which express in themselves the desire for unanimity. 'I am surprised that you observed that the resolutions passed by the conference were "safely vague and delicately mild". Allow me to say they were not safely vague, though it is possible they may be considered to be very far from being indelicately revolutionary.'[32]

Both Kunzru and Bishember Nath embodied the same combination of private orthodoxy and public secularism. Originally, the strength of the Kashmiris was seen to reside in the latter quality. By the end of the nineteenth century, however, the private virtue of orthodoxy began to acquire greater public currency in an environment of growing communal identity and identification. If Muslims regarded the Kashmiri Pandits with an intimacy born of habit and a hope born of vulnerability, Hindus of the province viewed the Pandits with suspicion and distrust; in part because of the very favour of Muslims. The strain of the balancing act was not something that could be maintained indefinitely. Orthodoxy became too valuable a quality for the insecure to do without it.

Despite the continued efforts of tradition bearers among the Pandits to preserve cross-communal links, the number of defectors from that tradition grew.

[30] *The Indian People*, 9 Oct. 1903, p. 157.
[31] Ibid., 16 Oct. 1903, p. 176.
[32] Ibid.

The erosion was demonstrated by the passage of the Nagri Resolution in 1901. The resolution was implemented by Sir Anthony MacDonnell, Lieutenant-Governor of the province, as part of a series of measures, the effect of which, as Christopher Bayly noted, was to 'broadly diminish the influence of the Urdu-writing service communities.'[33]

MacDonnell harbored a vast and unconcealed dislike for the traditional administrative class, a dislike which drove him to break up cartels in government offices and to reduce the proportion of administrative posts occupied by Muslims.[34] Anyone who had risen through the system was bound to incur at least the suspicion of the Lieutenant-Governor. 'I attribute the corruption among Deputy Collectors to the fact that the Deputy Collectors are selected from men who entered our offices in the lowest grade and worked their way up, soiled in their progress by the corruption through which they had to pass.... The evil habits of the *amla* class stick through life.'[35]

MacDonnell denied that he had any particular prejudice against Muslims—but in a fashion which suggested only that his hostility embraced the whole of the traditional service class rather than segment thereof. 'I endeavour to adjust appointments in regard to the relative numbers and influence of the two religions... Having regard to the traditional position which Muslims held in government and to [their being] better educated than Hindus (except the Kayastha class of whom one can easily have enough).'[36] The policies adopted by MacDonnell therefore 'could only be taken as a direct assault on the interests of the old service families,' as Bayly observed.[37] And of all the measures threatening the access, welfare, and unity of the traditional literate élite, none was more ominous than the Nagri Resolution.

The advocates of Nagri were not part of the traditional service élite of the province. Their commitment to Nagri was part of a religious commitment—Nagri was the script in which Sanskrit was written. Their strategy was in part founded upon pressuring Hindu

[33]Bayly, *Local Roots*, p. 152.

[34]Ibid., pp. 151–3.

[35]Minute on Completion of the Term of Lieutenant Governorship, U. P. Provinces, for his Successor, Oct. 1901, MacDonnell Papers,

[36]Ibid.

[37]Bayly, *Local Roots*, p. 153.

members of the administrative élite. 'If Kayasths and Kashmiris would place themselves on the side of Hindi, then a good deal of help would be gained for promoting Hindi,' wrote Sham Sunder Das, one of the founders of the Nagari Pracharani Sabha.[38] The Kashmiris and Kayasths were not persuaded, however. Das remarked ruefully: 'When among Kashmiri Pandits there are even those individuals who consider it their good fortune to accept Urdu as their "mother tongue" then what hope can there be ?'[39] Although the Kayasths and the Pandits remained unenthusiastic, the Lieutenant-Governor did not. Sir Anthony MacDonnell proved receptive. The effect of his approval was to reduce the shared elements among the service elite.

The proposal incorporated in the Resolution (to introduce the Devanagri script alongside the Persian in official communication), was originally a qualified one. In August 1899, F. J. Pert, Secretary to the Board of Revenue, informed the government that the matter contemplated did 'not involve a substitution of the Nagri character for the Persian, but a more complete recognition of the Nagri character in Eastern Divisions as being the character in which the vernacular of the country is read and written by the great mass of the village population.'[40]

The final provisions of the Resolution were not confined to the Eastern Divisions, however. Instead, the text specified that communications addressed to the administration could be submitted in either the Persian or the Nagri script and that communication from the government to the public should be printed in both scripts throughout the province. Moreover—the clause traditional employees of government found most alarming—the Resolution barred appointments (except in a purely English office) to any person 'henceforward, unless he can read and write both the Nagri and Persian characters fluently.'[41]

MacDonnell underestimated the impact that this piece of legislation would have on the servce communities, conceiving of it

[38]Sham Sunder Das, quoted in C. R. King, The Nagari Pracharani Sabha (Society for the Promotion of the Nagari Script and Language of Benares 1893-1914: A Study in the Social and Political History of the Hindi Language', Phd.thesis,Wisconsin, p. 292.

[39]Ibid.

[40]Northwestern Provinces and Oudh, *Central Administration Dept.*, Oct. 1900, No. 33, p. 93, 16 August 1899.

[41]NWP & Oudh, *C. A. D.* October, 1900, Procdgs, No. 51, 19 Feb., 1900.

as a minor departure for the convenience of the innocent masses, victimized by the machinations of government servants. 'The orders have given great satisfaction to the Hindu population as a whole,' the Lieutenant-Governor observed, 'but have displeased some Muslims and some Kayasthas who know Urdu better than Hindi . . . . No doubt the Hindus suffered substantial inconvenience from the fact that all documents in court are in Urdu which 90 per cent of the population does not speak or write.'[42] The alienation of the Persian literates did not disturb MacDonnell unduly.

MacDonnell failed to anticipate the degree of horror with which the resolution was perceived by employees of the provincial administration. One Banke Lal 'Zar' wrote in disbelief to the *Indian Daily Telegraph* when he heard of the prospective resolution: 'Hindi has been a dead letter . . . . Ninety per cent of the officials in the vernacular department of government do not know Hindi.'[43] (Government, from the perspective of government servants, was clearly a device for the convenience of its employees rather than for the public.)

An editorial in *The Pioneer* suggested that 'it may be found that even Hindu pleaders and petition writers in reality prefer Persian,'[44] while *The Times of India* speculated that the move may have been designed to divide the literate elite on communal lines. 'If, as critics allege, Anthony MacDonnell desired to efface any understanding between Hindus and Muslims in the Northwestern Provinces and Oudh, he could not have chosen a better plan than to issue the Nagri Resolution[although] it is true that fierce controversy is restricted to the educated men in the contending communities and the masses are indifferent.'[45]

*The Times* based this possible interpretation of the provincial government's action on alarm at the united front between Muslims and Hindus during the Kanpur plague demonstrations. (The religious communities had banded together to oppose administrative regulations.) Not all newspapers accepted this theory. Although the *Civil and Military Gazette* noted 'some sense between the Cawnpore Riots and the Nagri Resolution in order

[42]MacDonnell, *Memorial*, p. 40.

[43]*Indian Daily Telegraph*, 1 April 1900, contained in MacDonnell Papers, Boldeian Library, Oxford.

[44]*The Pioneer*, 28 May 1900, in MacDonnell Papers.

[45]*The Times of India*, 5 June 1900, in MacDonnell Papers.

that Hindus and Muslims might be diverted from disquieting combinations,'[46] it denied that this was what motivated MacDonnell.

In a speech made in Benaras in midsummer, the Lieutenant-Governor offered his own interpretation of the opposition, stating that he thought 'those who object are working to keep the people and government apart,'[47] and attributed opposition to the Nagri Resolution to defeated ambitions rather than stymied (and possibly legitimate) expectations.

Whether or not dissension between the two religious groups of traditional government servants was the *intention* of the head of the provincial government (and this seems doubtful), it certainly was the *effect* of the Resolution. 'The innovation is a wrong step,' warned the *Pioneer*, 'because the sense of injury is more lasting than the sense of benefits received.'[48] This sense of injury was strong. Urdu was not only an economic resource, control of which facilitated access to the much greater resource of official employ; Urdu was the symbol of a whole culture. The commitment to Urdu was affective as well as material.[49]

Those who loved Urdu valued it in part because it was understood to be a synthetic tongue, an expression of shared culture. 'I believe the growth of Urdu was in the seventeenth and eighteenth century a natural sequence of the commingling of the Hindus and Muslims in north India. It toned down mutual differences and enabled the Hindus to understand the Muslims and the Muslims to understand Hindus,' wrote Sapru in 1940.[50]

The ultimate consequence of the Nagri Resolution was the straining of the cross-communal coalition by reducing the shared elements in their tradition. Muslims who opposed the Resolution took pains to stress that Urdu was not only 'their' language by invoking the names of Hindus in their defence—invoking especially the names of Kashmiri Pandits.

While meetings in support of Urdu attracted a majority of

[46] *Civil and Military Gazette*, 10 June 1900, MacDonnell Papers.
[47] *Indian Daily Telegraph*, 3 June 1900, MacDonnell Papers.
[48] *The Pioneer*, 12 May 1900, MacDonnell Papers.
[49] Ibid., 23 August 1900.
[50] Tej Bahadur Sapru, 'On the National Language', first published in *National Language for India* (*A Symposium*) comp. Z. A. Ahmad Kitabistan, 1941; reprinted in *Tej Bahadur Sapru Commemorative Vol.*, p. 251.

Muslim demonstrators, an attempt was made to give them a bi-communal aspect. Thus, the account published by the *Indian Daily Telegraph* of a rally in Unao emphasized both that 'Hindus and Muslims took part,'[51] and the fact that the denigration of Urdu did not benefit Hindus. The resolution denouncing MacDonnell's actions was proposed by a Hindu and seconded by a Hindu. While the text of a telegram sent to the Viceroy was composed by a Muslim, that, too, was seconded by a Hindu.[52] Although meetings in Agra, Aligarh, and Bara Banki attracted Muslims,[53] in Farrukhabad 'Hindus took part as enthusiastically as Muslims,[54] and in Rai Bareilly there was 'a well crowded meeting of Hindus and Muslims, gentlemen all; professionals, pleaders, *mukhtars*, *mahajans* and *maulvis*.'[55]

Most Hindus however came under enormous pressure to adopt Nagri. As the *Times of India* noted in June of 1900, 'Both Allahabad and Lucknow contemporaries agree in the North-western Provinces and Oudh even Hindu pleaders and petition writers prefer Urdu, but it is not likely they will continue to do so now.'[56] The pressure did not originate with those the reform was designed to benefit, i.e. the villagers and peasants, but with those who petitioned for the change initially, the Hindu communalists.

Devanagri was advocated more for its divine associations than for its mass appeal; Sanskrit was the language of the gods and Nagri was the script in which it was written. The movement for the propagation of this script came to be an assertion of religious identity and exclusiveness, rather than democratization. Thus, many of the members of societies for the promotion of Nagri were also active in cow protection associations. At the same time, the resolution served to advance the interests of members of the literate élite whose traditions were not the indigenous Mughal traditions. The Nagar Brahmans, a community whose numbers in Allahabad were increasing at this time and who were, according to Buckee, the chief competitors of the Kashmiris in the High Court,[57] for example, had no stake in a monopoly position for the

[51]Cited in Hamid Ali Khan, *Indian Daily Telegraph*, 18 July 1900.
[52]Ibid., *The Pioneer*, 16 May 1900.
[53]Ibid., 17 May 1900.
[54]Ibid., *Indian Daily Telegraph*, 13 May 1900.
[55]Ibid., *The Pioneer*, 20 May 1900.
[56]Ibid., *The Indian Daily Telegraph*, 8 August 1900; MacDonnell Papers.
[57]Buckee, *High Court*, p. 186.

Persian script. Nagar Brahmans such as Pandit Sundar Lal worked with religious activists outside government service to promote the cause of Nagri against the claims of the Urdu speakers.[58]

Within a year of the passage of the controversial resolution, complaints were manifest on both sides. Local administrations, it was said, were tardy in implementing the reforms; complaints submitted in the Nagri script were reputedly rejected altogether in some districts.[59] On the other hand, the *Indian Daily Telegraph* thought that 'the Nagri Resolution has added to the work of staff offices and courts. The fact that no curb has been put on the propensity of Hindu scribes' use of Sanskrit words of portentous length gives colour to the communalist imputation that the Lieutenant-Governor favoured the Hindus'.[60]

In 1906, Tej Bahadur Sapru travelled from Allahabad to Lucknow to preside over the first anniversary of the Kashmiri Young Men's Association; a commemoration which was celebrated in the Shadi Khanna of Daya Nindhan Ganjoo in the new part of the city.

The Young Men's Association was launched by Brij Narain Chakbast (1882–1926), the community's leading Urdu poet. Chakbast was the literary heir of Ratan Nath Dar Sarshar; his intellectual mentor was Manohar Lal Zutshi. Chakbast was raised in Faizabad and sent to Lucknow for his higher education. He received his bachelor's degree from Canning College in 1901, followed that with legal studies, and obtained his L. L. B. two years later.

Chakbast made his debut as a poet at the fourth annual social conference of the Pandits of Lucknow in 1894. At the worldly-wise age of twelve, the young composer read a *nazm* on the 'Candle of the Light of the Progress of the Community', which had as its theme a plea for unity.[61]

Chakbast adapted traditional Urdu forms of poetry to convey political and social messages rather than to demonstrate mastery of conventional forms. Most of his poetry was highly patriotic, eliciting nationalistic sentiments by the use of familiar imagery as

[58]Bayly, *Local Roots*, p. 152.

[59]NWP & O, *C. A. D.* Oct. 1900. No. 133, Chief Secretary to Registrar, High Court, 23 July 1900.

[60]*Indian Daily Telegraph*, 11 November 1901, MacDonnell Papers.

[61]*Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. 1, p. 208.

well as direct appeal. 'It is foolish to exchange flowers for thorns/ yet I would not even take Paradise in exchange for Home Rule,' wrote Chakbast in a typical stanza.[62]

Although figures such as Arjun (from the Mahabharata) and Rama appeared in Chakbast's poetry, the image and vocabulary were not drawn exclusively from Hindu cultural traditions. The concept of *Bahisht* or paradise, an Islamic image, was employed frequently by the poet and Akbar and other non-Hindus were encountered in the *ghazals* and *nazms*. The nationalism to which Chakbast dedicated much of his work was not an exclusive one. In 'Faryad-i-Quam' (*faryad* is frequently the verb utilized to describe the reproaches a lover delivers to his beloved in more conventional poetry), for example, the poet lamented that 'the British have ruined what was once a Paradise/Indians are starving while the British live in luxury.' Later in the work, Chakbast stressed that it was both Muslims and Hindus who were suffering.[63]

The second important theme in Chakbast's poetry was the nature of social reform. Chakbast was an advocate of change, but like most Kashmiris, he stressed that change must not be too abrupt nor too extreme. In his 'Phool Mala' ('Necklace of Flowers') he characteristically advised that it is reasonable not to wear a veil but cautioned against 'shameless' behaviour. He also appealed for balance. He opposed superficial change but warned against denigrating indigenous culture. Western culture, he implied, in a fashion similar to so many Asian thinkers dealing with the problem of cultural interaction, was both attractive and seductive. To be exposed to it without totally succumbing to it was difficult but essential.[64]

The club, like the poetry, was designed to promote reasonable change. It was dedicated to a repudiation of those elements in the Kashmiri tradition which impeded reform. It was aimed neither at a denial of past links with Mughal and nawabi culture nor at a disavowal or reaffirmation of the explicitly Hindu elements in the Pandits' tradition. Only those elements in the hybrid Kashmiri heritage which were perceived as a liability or embarrassment were the target of Chakbast and members of the club. Both the nawabi lifestyle, with its *nautch* parties and its opiated indulgence, and the rigidly prescribed rituals of Hinduism were seen as inappropriate to changing economic and social necessities.

[62]Ibid. [63]Ibid., pp. 224–5.
[64]Ibid., p. 227.

The Kashmiri Young Men's Club was designed more to support its young members than to threaten their elders; it was a product of shifting generational styles in a world where the problem of shifting generational styles was hitherto unknown. Another goal was reconciliation; the Club attempted to bring the youths of divided families together and confine the Bishen Sabha/Dharma Sabha controversy to the past—an attempt that was largely unsuccessful.

Despite Chakbast's pleas for cultural integrity, the role models adopted by the Young Men's Association were decidedly British. The Club was a world in which Kashmiri youth could almost pretend they were aspiring young Englishmen; the books on the library shelves were all in English, the conversation was genteel where formerly it had been cultured.

A group portrait taken in 1912, on the eighth anniversary of the Association, presented forty Kashmiris of varying age. Only a few were in English-style dress for the occasion, most preferred the familiar *ajhkan* and *topi*. But the traditional style of attire notwithstanding, most participants chose to pursue western types of occupations that placed them in the centre of an anglicized environment.

Of the forty members, eight became barristers or *vakils* and an additional four were judges. Six others held administrative positions, most on the municipal level (an indication of the potency of Kashmiri connections and linkages in the city of Lucknow). An equal number were in the educational service. The zamindari families were represented by several young Chaks and Sham Sunder Nath Kaul, the offspring of the *chakladari* family whose fortunes received a boost from the British for services during the 1857 Rising. There were two Pandits who eventually took up mercantile careers, and finally there was one member of the principal *guru* family of the city.

This was not a typical cross-section of the Lucknow community. Members of the Club were the successful offspring of highly-placed fathers, especially those who were urban professionals.

The Association boasted a reading room and a library memorializing Shiv Narain Bahar, late editor of the *Murasla-i-Kashmir*, located in the home of Suraj Narain Bahadur, a sub-judge whose two sons, Anand Narain and Chand Narain, were active members of the Association. Anand Narain was a *vakil* (the third generation

of the family to take up law) while Chand Narain taught English and eventually became a professor at the Sri Partap College in Srinagar, along with his fellow club-member Iqbal Kishen Sharga.

The young men who belonged to the Association were tied to one another by a complex web of relationships, both economic and marital. Vishwa Nath Kukku, a District and Sessions judge, was, for example, brother-in-law of the Chak brothers, Sangam Lal and Pyare Lal. (The latter, said to have been one of the brightest students the community produced, died of influenza shortly after leaving Canning College in 1913.) The Chaks, in turn, were related to the Gurtoo family, Pyare Lal having wed the daughter of Brij Narain Gurtoo (b. 1867), whose grandfather Kishen Narain Gurtoo was Deputy Collector of Saugor during the Rising and who had received three villages in Kanpur and was made a Rai for his services at the time. Brij Narain's brother, Iqbal Narain, was also a member of the Club. He was asked to preside over the anniversary celebrations in 1907, and went on to become the vice-chancellor of Benaras Hindu University. Brij Narain's son, Ram Narain, was a judge of the Allahabad High Court as was the son of yet another member of the club, Hari Kishen Kaul.[65]

The father of member Iqbal Narain Masseldon, a barrister and a close friend of Bishen Narain Dar, Sham Narain Masseldon, was Municipal Commissioner of Lucknow. Maharaj Narain Chakbast, brother of Brij Narain Chakbast, was executive officer of the Lucknow Municipal Board. Another brother, Jagat Narain Chakbast, worked in the Secretariat under Jagat Narain Bahadur, a senior section officer. Jagat Narain in turn was married to the daughter of Harihar Nath Matoo, commissioner of income tax for Lucknow and Kanpur.

The legal and judicial network was highly comprehensive. Dukh Haran Nath Kaul was leader of the Unao Bar and chairman of the Unao Municipal Board. This put him in a position where he was able to advance the interests of the *taluqdari* Kaul family, whose estates were in Unao. Brij Kishen Gurtoo was president of the District Bar Association of Lucknow, while his colleague, Onkar Nath Kaul, led the bar at Bahraich, an honour he inherited from

[65]S. N. Kitchloo, *Milchar*, a Socio-cultural Organ of the Kashmiri Pandits Association of Bombay, Feb. 1979; interviews with Kitchloo, B. K. Gurtoo and J. D. Kaul.

his father, Triloki Nath Kaul. A different Triloki Nath Kaul dominated the legal practice of Hardoi. One of his brothers, Kameshwar Nath Kaul, was appointed Superintendent of Education by the Lucknow Municipal Board, while another, Rajeshwar Nath, eventually became principal of Queens College in Banaras and retired as Inspector of Schools. The fourth brother, Rameshwar Nath, taught before he died a premature death. Also in the educational field was Bishen Narain Dar's younger brother, Ratan Narain Dar, a sub-deputy inspector of schools, and Suraj Narain Kitchloo. Kitchloo eventually became principal of Colvin's Taluqdars College in Lucknow.

The common experience providing the *esprit* uniting the members of the Association was their education at Canning College and their belief in the necessity of this sort of education. Members of the club were also instrumental in establishing the first school for girls in Kashmiri Muhalla, in which young Kashmiri girls could receive training in English.

The Young Men's Association met weekly for twelve years; its purpose to 'broaden the minds of the young men and make them respect their elders and the ideals of the tradition and learn the good points of English culture.'[66] There were lectures and debates. On one occasion Brij Narain Chakbast invited Gokhale to dine at the club, precipitating a temporary uproar by conservative Pandits.[67] On another occasion, C.I.D. officers arrived at the reading room, pretending to be Kashmiris, but were 'hounded out unable to face the shower of cross questions about their identity as Kashmiris.'[68]

The Club was dissolved in 1918, the year Chakbast left Kashmiri Muhalla and moved to Gola Ganj in the new part of the city. Other members of the club left Lucknow to take jobs in the district towns. Lucknow retained its importance as the centre of the community and the place where Kashmiris went for their higher education, but the population dispersed. The club which provided both material and moral support for a generation had outgrown its utility, or perhaps its members had outgrown their need for it.

The Kashmiri community in Allahabad was less polarized than in Lucknow. In the nawabi capital, the two community extremes

[66]Interview with J. D. Kaul. [67]Interview with B. K. Gurtoo.
[68]*Milchar*, p. 29.

were to be found: old zamindari families, with their geographical base in Kashmiri Muhalla and their mental universe inclined toward traditional habits, were a hybrid of nawabi extravagance and Hindu austerities, at one extreme; and at the other were those who sought to soften both, curbing the indulgences and relaxing the prohibitions. Both these tendencies were less in evidence at Allahabad.

Allahabad, as C. B. Bayly has noted, was 'pre-eminently the city of the new professional man'.[69] By the turn of the century many of the progressive, well educated, and affluent Pandits were to be found in the city, the locale of the provincial High Court, the seat of the provincial administration, and the nucleus of the university system. Muir Central College, established in 1872, was made the core of the University in 1887. Kashmiris were as prominent on the 32-member governing Senate as they were on the student rolls.

While most institutions established by Anglo-Indian Allahabad did not invite native Indians to participate in their activities at this time, they exercised a considerable influence upon Indian middle class professionals, nevertheless. 'The lifestyle and attitudes of the Europeans affected the social conventions of the Indian professional men with whom they came into contact. By the 1890s, a few families of highly westernized lawyers, led by Moti Lal Nehru and Sachhidhananda Sinha (the Kayastha publicist) participated in a round of social and literary activities closely modeled on that of the Europeans.'[70]

Moti Lal Nehru refused an invitation from Sir John Edge, Chief Justice of the Allahabad High Court, to join the Allahabad Club initially.[71] But later, Nehrus and other Kashmiris figured quite prominently on the membership rolls. The Allahabad Club 'acted as a meeting ground for the upper professional and service groups,'[72] exercising considerable influence in securing both occupational and marital connections for the Pandits.[73]

[69]C. B. Bayly, 'Patrons and Politics in Northern India', *Locality, Province and Nation* (Cambridge, 1973), p. 31.

[70]Bayly, *Local Roots*, pp. 56–7.

[71]B. R. Nanda, *Moti Lal Nehru* (Delhi, 1964), p. 18.

[72]Bayly, *Local Roots*, p. 55.

[73]Moti Lal Nehru's great-niece, Sham Kumari, met the man she eventually married at the Rai Bareilly counterpart of the Allahabad Club, the Cosmopolitan Club. His social background was highly respectable, the only problem with Jamal

The development of western-style institutions reflecting the needs of Allahabad's English and then its anglicized Indian population was paralleled by the evolution of organizations dedicated to communal Hindu ends. The Prayag Hindu Samaj was established in 1880, as was the local Arya Samaj. In 1884, a Hindu Literary Institute, the predecessor of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, was founded.[74] Allahabad was not nearly as much influenced by Mughal traditions as Lucknow. The *Anjumun-i-Ruh-i-Adab*, which was founded by Sapru to promote Urdu in the city, never achieved the impact of the Hindi language associations.

The Mela, the annual fair held at the junction of the Ganga and Jamuna, served to dramatize Hindu activities and aspirations. It provided a common meeting ground for otherwise disputatious groups, under the amorphous umbrella of the term 'Hindu'. The cow protection societies which also emerged in the 1880s likewise represented a cause upon which all Hindus could unite. Hindu communal organizations, therefore, were far more part of the social landscape of Allahabad than of Lucknow.

Finally, Allahabad was the provincial centre of the Indian National Congress. Of the Kashmiri Pandits most active in the Congress movement, predictably, many resided in the city. Most were legal practitioners: Moti Lal Nehru, Tej Bahadur Sapru, Jagat Narain Mulla, Prithvi Nath Chak, Kailash Nath Katju, Iqbal Narain Masseldan, Bishen Narain Dar. Only two leading Kashmiri Congressmen were not in the law. These were Iqbal Narain Gurtoo, an educationalist who led the movement for a Hindu university in Benaras and ultimately became its vice-chancellor, and Hirday Nath Kunzru, the son of Ajudhia Nath and one of the leaders of the Servants of India Society. Most Kashmiri Pandits were to be found in the forefront of the moderate, less parochial, sectarian, wing of the Congress, led by the triumvirate of Sapru, Mulla and Nehru. Kunzru and Gurtoo, however, were in the more overtly Hindu faction of the provincial Congress which was headed by Madan Mohan Malaviya, the Malwi Brahmin.

From the beginning, the Kashmiris played a disproportionate

Khan was that he was Muslim. (Interview with Mrs Khan, Allahabad, April 1979.)

[74]Bishember Nath Pande, *Allahabad, Retrospect and Prospect* (Allahabad, 1955), p. 236.

role in the Congress. Of the forty-three delegates to the first Provincial Conference of the Congress which met in Allahabad in 1907, eight were Kashmiris. They largely were responsible for the advocacy of close relations with Muslims within the Congress movement. Led by Sapru, Nehru and Mulla, they were the architects of the two great compromises the Congress effected with the Muslims: the Jahangirabad Pact of 1915 and the Lucknow Pact of the following year. The first agreement made possible the United Provinces Municipal Bill, and the second led to the establishment of an executive council to advise the Lieutenant-Governor on provincial administration.

CHAPTER XVIII

# Leadership in the U. P.
# The Kashmiri Triumvirate

The succeeding generation of Kashmiri Brahmans perpetuated the cross-communal tradition and attempted to resist the trend toward growing polarization. But even the most ardent supporters of secularism and bi-communal co-operation came under enormous strain. Participation in purely and overtly Hindu activities reflected this pressure; the demands of the communalists were becoming too compelling.

It was at this time that leadership of the community, regardless of direction, passed definitively into the hands of a generation of western-educated professionals with strong roots either in the Mughal court or its satellite in Avadh. (The Nehrus and the Saprus were of the first and the Mullas of the second category.) They were almost all legal practitioners, and the sons of government servants.

The Lucknow Pact of 1916, which committed Hindus and Muslims of the then United Provinces to co-operate, was the product, primarily, of three Kashmiri Pandits. It was testimony to the creative role the community could play as a bridge between the two religious groups. It was an impressive achievement, but not, unfortunately, a portentous one: the commitment to cross-communal relationships was not consistent. Even those Pandits who spoke out most vigorously in defense of the Urdu language and Hindu–Muslim co-operation also participated in activities of exclusively Hindu organizations and occasionally spoke on behalf of the 'Hindu Community'.

In his autobiography, Kailash Nath Katju described the evolution of the lawyers and their culture. According to Katju, the lawyers were the new patrons of the community; it was they who 'organized and managed philanthropic and educational institutions

and charitable societies.' Law was not merely an alternative to government service; it was both superior and antagonistic to it. Reflecting changing community values, Katju maintained the lawyers were far more independent than government officials. 'It is only the lawyer who could on occasion stand up to the bureaucracy of the day, the local tyrants,' he declared. The elevation of the legal profession was founded upon a novel concept of public life. Lawyers were said to be 'leaders of public opinion' who 'dominate all public life'. And 'socially,' Katju added, 'membership in the profession conferred status and dignity.'[1]

The Kashmiris most in the public eye were Moti Lal Nehru, Tej Bahadur Sapru and Jagat Narain Mulla. These three came to be known as the Kashmiri Triumvirate and all were lawyers. Two of the three dominated internal community affairs as well, while the third, Nehru, greatly influenced them as model, if not participant. The Saprus were orginally from the village of Supori in Kashmir. According to the family, the surname means goldsmith;[2] another source gives the meaning 'well learnt' or 'sabiq para', the lesson referring to the early literacy in Persian family members in the service of the Sultans of Kashmir acquired.[3]

Devi Sahai was the first Sapru in the plains, while his son Radha Kishen (1828–1906) made the family fortune. Radha Kishen received his early education in Agra. He was then sent to Delhi, where he became one of the first students at the Delhi College, and later became a professor at the school. For his services during the Mutiny he was given villages in Gurgaon and Karnal near Delhi, to which he added property purchased in Bijnor. When he retired, it was with the rank of Deputy Collector.[4] Radha Kishen's only son, Ambika Prasad, lived an unexceptional life in Delhi. Because he was considered a wastrel by the family, his son Tej Bahadur (1875–1949) was given to his paternal grandfather. Like his grandfather, Tej Bahadur was educated in Agra, where he received his Bachelor's degree in 1894 and his Master's the following year. Sapru then turned to the law, began practising in Moradabad, and moved to Allahabad in 1898. There he received his

[1]K. N. Katju, *Days I Remember* (Calcutta, 1961), p. 13.
[2]Interview with Mrs Shobha Sapru, Allahabad, April 1979.
[3]S. Abdullah, p. 11.
[4]Obituary, *The Indian People*, 22 Nov. 1906.

doctorate in law, joined the university faculty, and founded the *Allahabad Law Journal*.

Sapru became the patron for the entire Kashmiri student population of the city. Numerous students stayed at his home, while for others his residence served at least as refectory. The Sapru household was orthodox and there was always a Kashmiri Brahman cook in the kitchen, a fact which must have proved persuasive when parents debated sending their sons to Allahabad.

In his autobiography, Katju described the role Sapru played in his own student days, a role known to numerous other young Kashmiris. 'Our family was totally a stranger to Allahabad, we had no connections or family there, but as a fellow member of the Kashmiri Pandit community, father had written for advice to Tej Bahadur Sapru and Sapru had suggested Allahabad, being the seat of the High Court and the University, as the most suitable and kindly offered to look after me if I went there,' wrote Katju.[5]

Katju did enroll in Muir Central College in 1905 and stayed with Sapru until he shifted to the Hindu Boarding House. Much later, when Sapru was seriously ill, Katju wrote to his mentor to express gratitude for the hospitality, 'It is now 42 years that I put up in your house and all these years I have received nothing but kindness from you. Professionally, what I am is due to what I learned in your chambers.'[6]

Personal involvement with the Kashmiri community gave Sapru a certain amount of leverage which occasionally had political ramifications. Sapru could always make an appeal on the basis of intimacy.

'Your whole education, your upbringing, and the makeup of your mind cannot permit you to think in terms of caste, creed, or colour,' he reminded Jawaharlal Nehru in characteristic fashion a year before Independence.[7]

Although the Kashmiri community was not a source of public power for Sapru as it was for Raja Narendra Nath in the Punjab, his identity as a Kashmiri was obviously important to Sapru and he was deeply invloved in community affairs. From 1903 to 1906 Sapru published a community journal entitled *Kashmiri Darpan*, in which he espoused moderation and emphasized unity among

[5]Katju, *Days I Remember*, p. 2.
[6]Sapru Letters, K-LO, dated 7 July 1947.
[7]Ibid., N-31, 31 August 1946.

contending factions. In the introductory issue of this Urdu monthly, Sapru wrote that he had begun the publication because the Kashmiris lacked a community journal. 'Although other communities have magazines, they are of no use to us as our customs and traditions are different from the others.'[8] Sapru felt, as Kashmiris always seemed to, that the Pandits were by no means fully integrated into the north Indian enviornment, despite the passage of time, and his own success.

By the turn of the century, one of the questions that was being raised in social forums concerned caste identity and whether identifying with one's community was positive or not. Nationalists frequently charged that loyalty to one's caste group impeded the development of larger sentiments, while social reformers thought that to bypass caste groups was the effective way to promote social change.

When the Kashmiri National Association met in Lahore and Delhi, for example, Dr Shiv Narain Razdan, chairman of the first meeting, and Brij Narain Tankhwa, a Lucknow advocate who chaired the second meeting, both defended the gathering from these charges of parochialism. 'One group is against conferences,' said Tankhwa. 'They think this makes our thinking very restricted and we lose national perspective. But this is not true. We can help the country if we are strong.[9] Razdan began his speech by addressing himself to two doubts. 'First is the objection raised that we have called this conference when the Indian National Congress is having a conference. The reason is most members of the community agreed to have it at this time. The second objection is that a conference like this will be in the way of national progress. It will cause communal feeling among the Kashmiri Pandits. The answer to this objection is that this conference is not political. Political questions like the reservation for different communities will not be discussed here. Its only aim is to help the social and economic progress of Kashmiri Pandits. The questions and problems that we are going to discuss here can only be solved by the Pandits themselves. So, for the reasons given above, the nationalist Pandits should have no objection to this conference.'[10]

[8] *Kashmiri Darpan*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1903.

[9] The Second All India Kashmiri Pandit Conference, *Report*, Pt Kailash Narain Kaul, M. Sc. Secretary, Reception Committee (Delhi, 1931), pp. 24–35.

[10] Ibid., Pt Saroop Narain Raina Razdan 'Aimen' B. A., Secretary, Committee, p. 16 (Urdu).

Sapru, however, had no difficulties in balancing felt obligations to the community with other obligations. He was torn neither by the debate which made community loyalty seem antagonistic to national or communal struggles, nor by any internál debate within the community.

Sapru shunned confrontation on both community and political issues, either because he had an aversion to conflict, typical of the Pandits, or because he perceived no conflict. Within the community, he was participant without being partisan. In internal affairs and in national politics he was always sympathetic to the aims of the reformers but favoured gradualist techniques and avoided polarization.

His public role was only one aspect of his involvement in community affairs. Letters that have been preserved indicate the extent to which his advice and help were solicited by the Pandits.[11] The community took a 'special pride'[12] in Sapru, and identified with him in a way they did not seem to with Nehru. This was so because of the personal connections which Sapru maintained. 'Members of our community have always [operated] in the face of adversity. [There is] this inherent defensiveness to see things through up to the end, however bitter the struggle, and you, the leader of us all, cannot possibly do otherwise,' wrote Ram Krishna Handoo to Sapru.[13]

The role Sapru played in the affairs of the Allahabadi Pandits was taken, albeit to a lesser degree, by Jagat Narain Mulla (1864-1936) in Lucknow.[14] Meetings of the local Pandits met in the Mulla residence; Kashmiri students of Canning College could expect to be

[11] See, for example, Sapru Letters, K-25, a letter asking for a reference for a Rhodes Scholarship, from Prakash Narain Sapru. Sapru wrote to the committe: 'I have come closely in touch with [Kaul] during the last 5 or 6 years while he has been at the Universsity . . . He used to see me often and worked in my private library.' Also a letter from Brij Krishna Topa, T-21, in which he requests Sapru to recommend his son, Kunwar Krishna, to a lectureship on the law faculty at Allahabad. 'You know the boy personally . . . I need not write further except that I certainly depend on your support and backing.' Interviews as well elicit tales of individuals writing to Sapru and always getting suggestions for jobs. (Interview with Janki Nath Madan, Delhi, August 1979).

[12] Sapru Letters, K-1, from Sukh Deo Prasad Kak, 4 July 1922.

[13] Ibid., H-170, 25 April 1947.

[14] Interviews with Anand Narain Mulla and S. N. Mulla in Delhi and Allahabad, August and April 1979, have provided the information herein, except as otherwise state.

put up in the Mulla household. The Mullas were Bishen Sabha while the Saprus were Dharm Sabha, but in his private life Jagat Narain Mulla, like Sapru, was more traditional than religious; both, for example, employed Kashmiri cooks, and both were committed to healing the rift within the two wings of the community.

The Mullas, like the Saprus, came to the plains from the village of Sopor in Kashmir early in the nineteenth century. Kali Sahai, the father of Jagat Narain, like Radha Kishen Sapru, was made a Deputy Collector by the British and was highly regarded by John Briggs, according to the family. The family had close ties with Muslims of Lucknow. Kali Sahai's father, Lakshmi Narain, had been in the service of the Nawabs of Avadh. The links endured and much of the legal business that came to Jagat Narain came from wealthy Muslim landholders of Avadh;[15] the (Muslim) rajas of both Mahmudabad and Jahangirabad were his clients.

Jagat Narain combined in his lifestyle the habits of Indo-Persian courtiers and those of the westernized élite. Although his family was deeply in debt by the time Mulla passed his pleadership examination, by 1905 he was wealthy enough to shift from the ancestral quarters in Rani Khatri, near Kashmiri Muhalla, to a spacious residence opposite the Medical College. These quarters had to be big enough to accommodate the throngs attending the *mushairas* the Pandit sponsored. Mulla's English was good, but his Persian was considered outstanding; it was said he spoke the language better than a Muslim (as had been said of Kunzru before him). In photographs, Jagat Narain looked like a Mughal. There are portraits of him which show him posing on a *takht*: a moustached figure garbed in *churidar* trousers and *ajkan*.[16]

The third member of the Kashmiri Triumvirate, Moti Lal Nehru (1861-1931), was descended from a line of Mughal government servants who had worked for the Mughals in Delhi since early in the eighteenth century, when Farrukhsiyar was emperor.[17] Moti Lal's grandfather, Lakshmi Narain, served as *vakil* of the East Indian Company to the court and his son, Ganga Dhar, was *kotwal* in the Mughal capital.

[15]C. Khaliquzzaman, *Pathways to Pakistan* (Lahore, 1961) p. 7.

[16]Photographs in the possession of S. N. Mulla, Allahabad.

[17]The account below is derived from a two-page 'Short History of the Nehru Family', a manuscript in the Moti Lal Nehru Papers, Nehru Library, Delhi.

When the Rising took place in 1857, the *kotwal*, with his daughters and two sons, Bansi Dhar and Nand Lal, left Delhi and settled in Agra. The party encountered a group of British soldiers in the course of their flight who thought one of Ganga Dhar's daughters was English, because the 'little girl was very fair, as some Ḳashmiri children are.' Nand Lal was fluent enough in English, fortunately, to clarify the situation. In the post-Rising period, Nand Lal served as *diwan* of Khetri and then practised law in Agra. When Ganga Dhar died, Nand Lal took the responsibility for the rest of the family and brought up the youngters, including Moti Lal.

Moti Lal was first educated in Persian and Arabic, as were most Pandits whose families were in imperial service. He then went on to study at Kanpur and Allahabad. Moti Lal went into the law, as had his brother, practising three years under Pandit Prithvi Nath Chak in Kanpur before moving to Allahabad.[18] By this time Nand Lal was well established in Allahabad, where he had moved after the High Court was transferred there, and Moti Lal shared his brother's practice.

Bansi Dhar was one of the first Pandits to go abroad, returning to India in 1895, shortly after Prithvi Nath Razdan, and a decade after the tumult in the wake of Bishen Narain Dar's home-coming.[19] Four years later, Moti Lal too.went to England. Unlike previous Kashmiri travellers, however, he refused to perform the nominal *prachshit* ceremony, thereby fracṭuring the divided Pandits even further.

This refusal to perform the purifying rites demanded by prescriptive elements in the community was only one of a series of actions in which Nehru defied Kashmiri conventions. In an address to the Kashmiri National Association shortly after Moti Lal's death, Brij Narain Tankhwa noted that it was 'Pandit Moti Lal Nehru [who] broke the tradition of the veil (parda) 40 years ago and broke the exchange of articles in marriage 35 years ago.'[20] Unlike most Kashmiris, Nehru was relatively indifferent to the

[18]Prithvi Nath's brother, Madhu Prasad, was, like Nand Lal, an official in Kheri State, and it is possible that the Nehru-Chak ties were forged at that time. (Interview with Mrs. G. Langer, Lucknow, May 1979.)

[19]*Safir-i-Kashmir*,

[20]The Second All India Kashmiri Pandit Conference, p. 23.

opinion of the community; his biographer noted 'he rejected caste (but not the joint family).'[21]

Despite his lack of conformity, Nehru never had any difficulty in securing the services of a Kashmiri *purohit*. As a result, he was able to flaunt the wishes of the more traditional Pandits with impunity.[22] Nehru never took part in the institutionalized activities of the Pandits. Communal gatherings were not graced by his presence, community journals not swelled by his contributions. That he was of great interest to the community was apparent, however. The 'News of the Community' columns printed his whereabouts and his doings, but of direct participation there was little evidence, save the announcement of lavish funds donated for some worthy cause such as the relief of flood or famine victims in Kashmir.[23]

Although Kashmiri students were always welcome at the Nehru home, particularly for the Sunday meal, it was not a mandatory destination for Kashmiris passing through Allahabad, as Sapru's residence was. And many Kashmiris, including the wife of Tej Bahadur Sapru, refused to dine at Moti Lal's because standards of preparation and company were considered questionable.

The Morley-Minto reforms of 1909 which conceded separate representation and weightage to Muslims in the legislative councils made possible a greater sense of security for Muslims, thereby increasing their receptivity to joint action with Hindus. In the

[21]Nanda, *Moti Lal Nehru*, p. 41.

[22]The lack of effective sanctions from the *gurus* was a manifestation of the breakdown of the *jajmani* relationship. The family *purohit* was called upon for fewer services by the *karkuns* as they diverted their resources from ritual expenses to education. Lacking the means to support themselves from their traditional services, the *gurus* then began to send their children to English language schools. The gradual dissolution of the bonds between *karkuns* and *gurus* meant, as well, that a potential source of communal integration had broken down. For more on this, see the *Proceedings* of the Kashmiri Pandit conferences. There were few *gurus* in Allahabad in any case. Most remained in Lucknow, their base in Kashmiri Muhalla becoming somewhat ghostly as increasing numbers of the their clients moved into the newer areas of the city or to Allahabad. Moti Lal Nehru's family *guru* was the same as that of Bishen Narain Dar and lived in Lucknow. (Interview with Raja Guru, Lucknow, June 1979.)

[23]On one occasion, for example, Nehru donated 1,000 rupees to aid suffering Kashmiris. *Indian People*, 4 September 1903.

U.P., however, 'an element of discord threatened the harmonious progress of Congress and the League toward the formulation of a joint scheme of reforms.'[24]

In July 1915, the Lieutenant-Governor of the province, Sir James Meston (1865-1943), introduced a bill designed to increase non-official participation in municipal councils. An amendment proposed by the Muslim Raja of Jahangirabad provided that separate representation be extended to the municipal councils as it had been to the legislative councils. The question of separate representation triggered a confrontation whose repercussions would clearly extend far beyond the provincial boundaries.

'U.P. Muslim agitation against the refusal of Hindus to accept separate representation in the home of the League would most probably kill the Congress-League front over political reform. UP Hindu agitation over the acceptance of separate representation would not. It was evident that it was the Hindus who had to make the concessions to the Muslims. The men who took the lead in thus sacrificing local interests to national ends were three Kashmiri Brahmans, Tej Bahadur Sapru, Moti Lal Nehru and Jagat Narain Mulla. Moreover, they were the only members of the U.P. Legislative Council who were prepared to do so,' noted Francis Robinson.[25] It was a decision that was to entail heavy costs.

None of the Kashmiris were comfortable with the principle of separate representation. 'I do not believe in separate representation as an ideal thing,' said Sapru in the course of legislative debate:

> I am free to say that if I was asked whether I would stand by separate representation as a matter of abstract political principle, I should have no hesitation in condemning it. But unfortunately we do not live in a world of perfection, every day of our life we realize the imperfections of our surroundings and we also realize that compromise is of the very essence of politics . . .having regard to the circumstances which exist at present, the only solution lies in providing separate representation for the Muslim community. Separate representaton . . .is a necessary evil in our present social and political condition. Rightly or wrongly, I do not care which, the Muslim community has during the last eight or nine years, worked itself into a frame of mind which has made it impossible to believe that its interests, assuming that there are separate interests, will be adequately or sufficiently protected if they entered councils or

[24]Hugh P. Owen, 'Negotiating the Lucknow Pact', *Journal of Asian Studies*, xxxi, No. 3, May 1972, p. 574.

[25]Robinson, *Separatism*, p. 247.

municipal boards through the joint electorates. Assuming that they are wrong, I do not see how we the Hindus or any class of men can argue them out of that state of feeling. Therefore, in order to avoid this position of deadlock and in order to make it possible for the Muslim community to co-operate with us where co-operation is possible, and in order to remove at least one of the several causes of friction, I should not grudge separate representation to the Muslim community.[26]

Moti Lal Nehru, likewise, defended separate representation in the most lukewarm fashion. Referring to Jagat Narain Mulla and himself, Nehru told the Legislative council:

> We said that, although we were not in favour of communal representation, yet we would yield to the desire of our Muhammadan brethren because it had been so persistently put forward in the past . . . . There is nothing more pernicious to the public life than communal representation and if we have given in upon that point to our Muhammadan brethren, it is for the sake of peace. Over a question like this, my motto is peace at any price . . . . Whatever my personal views on the merits of the question may be, there is no doubt that, practically speaking, we cannot by preaching these principles, keep off the actual separate representation of Muhammadans for any length of time. It must come.[27]

The Municipalities Bill was sent to two committees for consideration. One was chaired by Sapru and the other by Nehru and Mulla. Both conceded separate representation. Neither, however, was able to come up with a specific formula for representation. Nehru suggested that the bill be postponed for the duration of World War I, a proposal Meston rejected, saying,

> Both Hindus and Muhammadans had reached a stage at which they regarded it as imperative that they should know the best and the worst with regard to the limitations and the concessions made by one side and accepted by the other . . . . The people whose interests we are here to safeguard are sick of these election squabbles and of the ruptures in their social relations which they entail.[28]

Most Hindus on the Council thought the decisions reached before the bill went to the full council for consideration were reached in secret deliberations of the Muslims with a few Hindus. Said Lal Sukhbir Singh, referring to the clauses of the bill relating to separate and weighted representation for Muslims:

> This subject seems to have been now discussed in an informal meeting

[26] *Proceedings of the United Provinces Legislative Council, 1916, The United Provinces Municipalities Bill, 1915* (henceforth *Proceedings*), p. 218.

[27] Ibid., p. 227.

[28] Ibid., p. 177.

> of certain members of the Council without the knowledge and in the absence of other members and it is stated that some conclusions have been arrived at by certain Hindu members who seem to have agreed to certain demands made by certain Muhammadan members. But neither these demands, nor the concessions made to them by certain Hindu members have been placed before the public . . . . The principle of separate election by religion is one fraught with serious difficulties . . . .[29]

Both Sapru's argument that separate representation was a necessary evil (necessary because otherwise co-operation was impossible) and Nehru's argument that it was, in any case, inevitable, attempted to minimize the importance of separate representation as a principle, and to stress that it was a passing phase of provincial politics. The Kashmiris maintained that evidence of Hindu willingness to compromise would provide reassurance sufficient to make future concessions unnecessary. Both Pandits publicly regarded separate representation as only a temporary device. 'The Hindus are, no doubt, making a sacrifice, but in my opinion it is justified as being made in the best interests of the country,' said Nehru:

> I fondly hope that our Muhammadan friends are seeking separation at present only to meet us again, and I have no doubt in my mind that after a few years' experience of separte electorates they will get tired of them. Meanwhile, the satisfaction which separate electorates will, for the present, afford to our Muhammadan friends, will lead them to co-operate more and more with Hindus in political life and both parties will come to understand each other better.[30]

Sapru articulated the same hope as Nehru:

> Perhaps some of my friends may ask that, if I am making this concession in favour of the Muhammadans in the hope that they will co-operate with us, where is the guarantee that they will do so? . . . No one in this Council can give a legally binding undertaking but what we have got to ask is, are we justified in assuming that, in spite of the fact that the Muhammadans are getting so many more seats they will continue to oppose us at every step? I for one think that where a concession like this is made, it must be responded to by the opposite party. I do not think the Muhammadans are such a hopeless lot that in spite of the compromise which is being effected today they will go against us in season and out of season on any and every question . . . I believe in the moral influence of compromise.[31]

The very fact that Sapru raised this question, the very fact that Nehru had to say he had no doubt that the compromise would

[29]Ibid., p. 171. [30]Ibid., p. 228. [31]Ibid., p. 220.

prove both ephemeral and workable, indicated that the Kashmiris were, perhaps, more apprehensive than they admitted. They were clearly taking a risk. Publicly, they were betting that the Muslims would co-operate with the Hindus. But this was only one risk. The other risk was that they were alienating themselves from the Hindus. They were putting themselves out on a limb for Muslims who were indifferent to their fate at the hands of 'betrayed' Hindus. They were working for compromise in an environment that did not favour compromise; they were sacrificing for a greater national cause when the goal of others was to defend threatened religion.

Most Hindus opposed the provision of separate electorates for the provincial Muslims; only six of the fourteen Hindus on the Council supported the Jahangirabad Amendment.[32] Those who did not were from a different social, if not religious, world from the Pandits. They tended to be from the commercial rather than the clerical groups, and from centres of Hindu rather than Mughal culture within the province. All were members of the Hindu Sabha.[33]

Although there were three other Hindus who voted with the Kashmiri Triumvirate in support of the amendment, Hindu opposition came to focus on the Pandits. The links between the Kashmiris and the Muslims, once the source of material welfare and social prestige, became suspect. In the eyes of the Hindu majority, the connection became a liability—at a time when such ties should have been strengthened rather than castigated. In Kanpur it was said of the three that they were 'little better than Muhammadans and they have sold their Hindu brethren'; in Lucknow, Sapru and Mulla were burnt in effigy.[34]

The Lucknow Pact, whereby the Congress reached agreement with the Muslim League to support separate electorates in the provincial legislatures with 'substantial weightage' to Muslims in Hindu majority provinces,[35] was essentially a repeat of the provincial debate over the Municipalities Bill. The debate was dominated by the same participants; once again the Kashmiris induced the

[32]Francis Robinson, 'Municipal Government and Muslim Separatism', in *Locality, Province, and Nation: Essays on Indian Politics 1870-1940* (Cambridge, 1973), p. 116.
[33]Ibid., p. 118. [34]Robinson, *Separatism*, p. 250.
[35]R. J. Moore, *The Crisis of Indian Unity* (Oxford, 1974), p. 19.

majority of Hindus to compromise with and reassure the Muslims for the sake of national unity. In the U.P., the Muslims were granted 30 per cent of the Indian seats, a figure Sapru and Nehru were able to persuade the All India Congress Committee to accept over the bitter opposition of Madan Mohan Malviya.[36] Although the Pact signified accord between Hindus and Muslims, it was largely an agreement between members of the Urdu-speaking literate élite of the province who had more in common with each other than with their co-religionists. Most of the Muslims involved in the negotiations were from the same cultural world as the Pandits; most lived in Lucknow, their families had been in courtly service, and they themselves were products both of an Indo-Persianate and an English education. Seven U.P. Muslims participated in the League debate with Congress.[37] Five of the seven were lawyers, five of the seven lived in Lucknow. Many were members of the *Rifah-i-Am* or the *Jalsa-i-Tahzib*. The Raja of Mahmudabad, one of the seven, had most of his litigation handled by Jagat Narain Mulla; Syed Ali Nabi, a resident of Agra, had worked with Nehru and Sapru in the Legislative Council; Samiullah Beg served with Mulla on the Municipal Board of Lucknow and on the Senate of Allahabad University, with several other Kashmiris. The Lucknow Pact, according to Jawaharlal Nehru, was drawn up at a meeting of the A.I.C.C. in the Nehru residence in Allahabad,[38] but took its name from the site of the 1916 Congress session. The title was equally apt as a description of the politicians who designed it, most of whom were from Lucknow and committed to its tradition of cross-communal co-operation.

The cost of political concessions to the Muslims was considerable. The pressures brought to bear on those Kashmiris who believed with Sapru that 'the evolution of India to higher and freer political institutions depends wholly upon a satisfactory readjustment of intercommunal relations'[39] based on harmony between Hindu and Muslim rather than suppression of the latter by the former, were enormous.

These pressures resulted in a certain ambivalent behavioural pattern on the part of the most secularly oriented Kashmiris. Even the '*adha* Mussalmans' or 'half Muslims' of the community joined

[36]Owen, 'Lucknow Pact', p. 578. [37]Ibid., p. 575.
[38]Nehru, *Towards Freedom*.
[39]*Proceedings*, p. 218.

the most parochial organizations. In negotiations over the Jahangirabad Amendment, even Moti Lal Nehru displayed a certain ambiguity and vacillation.

'Generally, the needs of local politics were paramoúnt,' noted Francis Robinson, who best portrayed the Pandits' dilemma:

> Those who tried to ignore those needs found themselves in trouble. To preserve this all-India alliance, they [Sapru and Nehru] were willing to make concessions to Muslims in the U.P. But by so doing, Sapru and Nehru risked their political existence in the province. Nehru was tied to a municipal base. Only by extraordinary contortions could he match principle with survival. In Council, he [carried on] his double game. He was the only Hindu who both voted against the moving of the bill and yet supported the Jahangirabad Amendment. He betrayed his uneasiness in correspondence with his son. The ambivalence of his position was summarized in a letter to the *Indian Daily Telegraph*. In it he wrote about the need for political union with advanced Muslims and stood by the principles of his formula but protested against the details of its application in Allahabad.[40]

The Kayasthas, who could be similarly faulted by Hindus for their assimilation to an Islamicized culture could not, at least, be accused of being outsiders. Bengalis attacked in the province as being foreigners were not subject to questions about their orthodoxy. And both groups at least had the security of numbers, something denied the small Kashmiri community. While their tradition predisposed the Kashmiris to form a bridge group extending from the majority body of Hindus in the Congress to Muslims, their circumstances made it difficult for them to do so.

The lives of the Pandits of the U.P. came to be characterized by a certain discontinuity between their public and private worlds. Elements of the Mughal culture which the Kashmiris had absorbed became part of their private environment as that culture became associated exclusively with Muslims and the price of public commitment to it by Hindus higher.

The Pandits of the Punjab did not experience this discontinuity to the same extent. Their private preferences and their public stance were better integrated with the local provincial culture. In the Punjab, the Pandits advocated the use of Punjabi or Hindi and used them at home. They thought they should study Sanskrit and they did. In the U.P., by contrast, the Pandits advocated the use of Hindi in public and lamented the demise of Urdu privately. They

[40]Robinson, 'Municipal Government', pp. 119-121.

agreed that Brahmans should study Sanskrit but preferred Persian themselves.

The often contradictory activities of many Pandits make it difficult to portray the nationalist and communalist campaigns as dichotomous, as they usually are depicted. The image of the Kashmiri community, moreover, as thoroughly non-communalist is also inaccurate. Both the community and individual members were subject to conflicting pulls.

Jawaharlal Nehru characterized the Hindu Mahasabha as 'communal, anti-national and reactionary.'[41] 'The Mahasabha not only hides the rankest and narrowest communalism but also desires to preserve the vested interests of the group of big Hindu landlords and princes. . . .the policy of the Mahasabha is a betrayal of the freedom struggle.'[42] Yet in the first year of the existence of a provincial Hindu Sabha Executive Committee in the U.P., of the twenty-four members, four were Kashmiri Brahmans.[43] And in 1919, six of the executive committee members were Pandits—the largest caste group in the organization.[44]

In 1910, when the idea of an All-India Mahasabha was first mooted, Moti Lal Nehru opposed it.[45] His opposition notwithstanding, Nehru was one of the four Kashmiris on the executive in the first year of the provincial Sabha's existence. The next year, however, he (along with Sapru) chose to absent himself when a special committee of the body met to protest the U.P. Municipalities Bill; in particular the Jahangirabad Amendment (the creation of the two members of the executive committee who declined to attend).[46]

Moreover, within the Mahasabha itself, not all the Kashmiris were to be found at the liberal end of the ideological spectrum. Both Inder Narain Gurtoo and Hirday Nath Kunzru were allied with Madan Mohan Malviya against Nehru.

[41]Indra Prakash, *Where We Differ, The Congress and the Hindu Mahasabha* (New Delhi, 1942), p. 137.

[42]Ibid., pp. 136-7.

[43]Richard Gordon, 'The Hindu Mahasabha and the Indian National Congress, 1915-1926', *Modern Asian Studies*, 9, 2, 1975, p. 153.

[44]Ibid., p. 159. [45]Ibid., p. 151. [47]Ibid., p. 157.

CHAPTER XIX

# Community Leadership in the Punjab

In regard to internal community matters, the Kashmiris of the Punjab were far more progressive than members of the *biradari* in Avadh and the Northwestern provinces, yet their commitment to religious observance was far stronger. They displayed neither the secularism nor the close social links with Muslims that prevailed in U.P.

Jagat Narain Mulla, for example, was the leader of the Lucknow community. He was traditional by local community standards, but in his larger outlook was far more involved with an Indo-Persian cultural heritage and a political commitment to secularism than his equivalent, Diwan Radhe Nath Kaul, in the Punjab.

Radhe Nath was born in Lahore in 1877 to Dwarka Nath Kaul, an extra-assistant commissioner whose own grandfather, Shanker Nath (1805-1905?) was a leading Kashmiri in the Khalsa Darbar and a brother-in-law of Raja Dina Nath. At Annexation he was in charge of the treasury of Kharak Singh.[1] He served several British officers immediately thereafter, for which he was given a substantial life pension and was made an honorary magistrate of Lahore in 1862. Dwarka Nath gave his son to Shanker Nath, who brought him up and eventually bequeathed to him his considerable properties. After obtaining his First Arts degree from Foreman Christian College, Radhe Nath dedicated himself to patronizing religious concerns.

Radhe Nath, who took his seat in the Punjabi Divisional Darbar in 1914 and was honorary assistant secretary of the Punjab Chiefs Association, was the typical Punjabi *rais*, combining support of western style and religious causes. He gave to the King Edward

[1] *Bahar-i-Gulshan-i-Kashmir*, Vol. 2, p. 205.

memorial Fund, the Coronation Celebration Fund, the Punjabi Imperial Relief Fund, and the Punjab Aeroplane Fleet Fund on the one hand, while contributing to various Hindu organizations on the other. He gave to the Sanatan Dharm College of Lahore and was on its Board of Directors for many years; he supported the establishment of temples in Kangra, and cow shelters in Amritsar.[2]

Radhe Nath was one of the patrons of the Kashmiri associations, contributing his money in such a way as to move the Kashmiris closer to religious concerns by the very nature of his contributions. The scholarships he offered outstanding Kashmiri students were not to enable them to go abroad, for example, but rather to attend the Sanatan Dharm College. He also raised money for a Satya Narain *mandir* for the Pandits of Lahore, and had *dharmsalas* for the Kashmiris constructed at Haridwar and *ghats* built along the Jamuna. He alternated with Narendra Nath as patron of Kashmiri gatherings and contributed articles to the community organs which reflected the same philosophy which led him to later join the Bharat Dharm Mahamandel.

As did Narendra Nath, albeit to a lesser extent, Radha Nath emphasized the brahmanical element in the Kashmiris' identity. 'According to Sanatan Dharm beliefs,' said Kaul, addressing the Pandits' jubilee celebration in Lahore in 1940, 'we are born in particular families not by chance but by the design of God and there cannot be any argument about it. We are first and foremost Kashmiri Brahmans and only then Punjabi Indians. Therefore we must stick to our religion and all that is expected from us.'[3] Radge Nath followed this introduction with an attack on the concept of personal, individual freedom: 'To do whatever one likes is very superficial. We should be bound to our religion.'[4]

While Kashmiris had stressed the fact that they were Brahmans since the end of the nineteenth century, their motivations had changed. Formerly they had been influenced by considerations of social status and defence of questioned origins. Their assertions were directed to non-Kashmiris. Now the Brahmanical component of the Pandits' composite heritage was presented to the community itself, as an exhortation to carry out religious obligations in their private lives. Exemplary behaviour was pious behaviour.

[2]Ibid. [3]*Bahar-i-Kashmir*, January 1940. [4]Ibid.

Daya Kishen Kaul was less an active participant in and moulder of the community than either Radhe Nath Kaul or Narendra Nath. The Kaul family position was, however, such as to ensure the family's visibility and influence. The Kauls combined service of the British with exploitation of commercial opportunities, illustrating thus the fortunes that could be made in Punjab by the acquisition of urban property and newly viable agricultural tracts.

In the years following annexation, Raja Suraj Kaul was the charge of Sir John Lawrence, who placed him in the Board of Administration; after that he became Superintendent of the Commissioner's office in Rawalpindi and then *Tehsildar* and Extra Assistant Commissioner,[5] In 1883 he was sent to Baluchistan as Political Assistant, a more martial assignment than was usually undertaken by the Pandits. Suraj Kaul cultivated the style of a Sikh aristocrat; he is recalled by his grandchildren as an excellent horseman and a skilled hunter:[6] qualities much valued in the frontier-like atmosphere of the northwest of India. The last years of his life Suraj Kaul was lent by the British government to Kashmir, where he served as financial minister and revenue member of the state council. While in Kashmir, Raja Suraj Kaul brought in many Pandits from the plains,[7] and paved the way for his son Daya Kishen by notifying the British Government that the Maharaja wished Daya Kishen to serve as his private secretary.[8] Daya Kishen was employed in that capacity from 1899 to1909. The appointment had the support of Sir Walter Lawrence,[9] with whom Suraj Kaul had formed close ties; if John Lawrence had brought up Suraj Kaul, Walter Lawrence did the same for his son, training him for political service and English society (even, according to his son, Upendra Kishen Kaul, teaching him Shakespeare[10]). The appointment also received the approval of Sir Hugh Barnes, then Foreign Secretary to the Government of India and past Resident in Kashmir, who noted, 'the appointment of a respectable, well-educated man like Daya Kishen Kaul is just what we have always been anxious to bring about.'

[5]Griffin and Massey, *Chiefs and Leading Families*, p. 370.

[6]Interview with Upendra Kishen Kaul, May 1979.

[7]Pran Nath Pandit interview. Pran Nath's grandfather, Ganga Ram, was brought from Amritsar to Srinagar by Suraj Kaul as Wazir Wazirat.

[8]Govt. of India Foreign Dept. SI, *Proceedings* Sept. 1910, No. 18-19.

[9]Ibid. [10]Interview with Raja Upendra Kishen Kaul (son of Daya Kishen), May 1979.

The successors of Lawrence and Barnes were notably less enthusiastic about Daya Kishen Kaul, however. When the Maharaja requested that Daya Kishen be made Revenue Secretary following the death of his brother Amar Singh, it was opposed by Francis Younghusband, who feared 'it would mean handing over Kashmir to Daya Kishen Kaul for years and we would never be able to get rid of him.' The Government of India expressed ambivalence about the Kashmiri: 'The state of Kashmir is in want of brains and energy and Daya Kishen Kaul is probably the only person who can supply them and would not need to be forced upon the Maharaja. [But] it must be admitted that Daya Kishen has not a reputation for honesty in money matters.'[11]

The ambivalence in regard to Daya Kishen endured, as both his power and wealth grew. Daya Kishen was said, by Younghusband, to be 'filling up posts in the state with his relatives and filling up his pockets with the Maharaja's money,' in 1907. But even Younghusband expressed surprise on being notified that the Pandit was financing extremists in the state, as did Louis Dane, then secretary to the Government of India. 'I should say Daya Kishen was too clever to help the extremists directly, although no doubt he would like to keep in touch with both sides. He is very intelligent.'[12]

The CID had its spies following the Kashmiri constantly, and fretted, in ignorance, about his intentions. Visits of the Pandit to various dancing girls were recorded, as well as undocumented plans such as one to collect money for the 'sedition mongers' at the wedding of Kaul's niece in Srinagar in June 1907.[13]

Long after Daya Kishen had left the Maharaja's employ, Government officials cast an uneasy eye on him, speculating about his motivations in much the same way as their predecessors had pondered those of Raja Dina Nath. In 1910, Daya Kishen departed for Alwar. Three years later, the Resident noted, Daya Kishen is better informed of all matters of state or private than some of the highest officials of the state....It is an open secret that Daya Kishen has a peculiar hold over His Highness by virtue of certain documents in his possession.'[14]

[11]*Government of India, Foreign Department.* SI *Proceedings* (Hereafter *Foreign Dept*), Younghusband to E. Barnes, Asst. Secy, 27 June 1907.

[12]*Foreign Dept.* 1907, No. 8, *Sedition in Kashmir.*

[13]Extract, daily report, 10 June 1907, CID.

[14]*Foreign and Political Dept.*, 1918, No. 1, Letter from H. V. Cobb, Resident to J. B. Wood, 31 July 1913.

Daya Kishen used his 'peculiar hold' over Maharaja Pratap Singh not to acquire power so much as to amass wealth. While in Alwar, Daya Kishen made frequent visits to Kashmir, which he claimed were to look after his property and investments, but which the British were certain had some more political motive. None, however, emerged. While in Kashmir state employ Daya Kishen accumulated sizeable property holdings in Srinagar, around Dal Lake, and in Jammu.[15] He acquired leases on the villages of Lasjian and Sotingu when the zamindars of these villages refused to accept the new assessments levied upon them in 1905, and the state council accepted the application of the Maharaja's private secretary to accept responsibility for the assessments.[16] Daya Kishen was responsible as well for allowing investment of foreign capital in the state, and when he made arrangements to improve the trade with West Tibet, he was one of the principal beneficiaries.[17]

The Private Secretary, according to S. W. Fraser, a later Resident, used his influence to persuade the Maharaja to purchase various properties in Lahore of which he himself then endeavoured to take possession. In 1901, Kaul bought bungalows worth 40,000 rupees in the city with the Maharaja's funds, and claimed that the Maharaja had made a gift of the purchase to his faithful servant two years later. The banker who had advanced the money took Daya Kishen Kaul to court in 1912, by which time the property was worth 68,000 rupees. In addition, Fraser maintained, Kaul had misappropriated 20,000 rupees which he had borrowed in his own name but under the alleged instructions of Pratab Singh for a visit to Calcutta. A further 10,000 rupees borrowed from a banker in Calcutta was the susbject of still another suit. Daya Kishen Kaul allegedly threatened the Maharaja with 'disclosure of the reason, discreditable to the Maharaja, which led to the gift' if he failed to support Daya Kishen's claims. 'There is little doubt,' the Resident concluded, 'that Daya Kishen has used his influence to rob His Highness of large sums.'[18]

When Daya Kishen left Kashmir, he requested that he be granted a pension of 800 rupees a month (half his salary), on the

[15]Ibid., 1916, No. 44, W. S. Talbot, Settlement Commisioner, to Wood, 15 June 1914. He encloses a detailed list of Kaul's holdings in the state.

[16]*Foreign Dept.*, Sept. 1910, No. 18-19.

[17]*Foreign and Political Dept.*, 1916, No. 44; note by J. B. Wood, 12-9-14.

[18]Ibid., S. M. Fraser to J. B. Wood, 19 April 1916.

grounds that his private enterprises had suffered great losses as a result of his absence in Kashmir. He claimed his chemical business was ruined (a loss of 30,000 rupees), and his income from rural investments had been reduced by 5,000 rupees annually for want of personal supervision. The grant was not sanctioned, and Daya Kishen had to content himself with a monthly income of 2,500 rupees as Finance Minister to Alwar.[19] He was able, in spite of this one setback, to carry on both real estate and commercial ventures.

The first land grants made to the Kaul family were those presented to Raja Suraj Kaul, 500 acres in what became the Chenab Canal colony in Gujranwalla, in recognition of his services in Baluchistan.[20] But it was Daya Kishen Kaul who really presided over the expansion of the family fortune.[21]

He was a capitalist as well as a landholder. He owned vast amounts of forest and timberland which he actively developed: the timber went into match factories both in Kashmir and the Shadara industrial area of Lahore, while the herbs provided the basis of a pharmaceutical concern. (Daya Kishen Kaul opened a factory which processed santonin, a form of wormwood used in the treatment of intestinal worms, for example).[22]

Daya Kishen's two brothers did not take up business. The eldest, Bal Kishen Kaul (1866-1937), became a doctor (the first in the community) and was on the staff of the Lahore Medical College. The next, Hari Kishen Kaul (1869-1941) joined the civil service, where he led a spectacularly successful (and less controversial) career. Hari Kishen Kaul was trusted far more by the British than Daya Kishen, and was frequently called upon to guarantee his brother's conduct in Kashmir.

The Kaul family was one of the few to venture into commerce, and those willing to follow their example enlisted their help. Daya Kishen's first son, who had been sent to Europe under the tutorship of Walter Lawrence, died in a motor accident while still young, but the sons of Hari Kishen were turned over to their uncle to be trained. Shiv Kishen Kaul (1892–1978) became associated with Daya Kishen's timber business and then moved on to his own

[19] *Foreign Dept.*, Sept. 1910, No. 18019, letter from Daya Kishen Kaul, 19 June 1910.

[20] Griffin and Massey, *Chiefs and Families*, p. 369.

[21] *Who's-Who in the Punjab*, p. 25.

[22] Interviews with Upendra Kishen Kaul and Mahendra Kishen Kaul, in Delhi, 7 May 1979 and 19 Aug. 1979.

textile trade, while Mahendra Kishen Kaul was placed by his uncle in the India Steamship and Navigation Company in Bombay and then in the Tata steel operation. Later, Daya Kishen's younger son, Upendra Kishen, joined the family enterprises, first managing a 10,000 acre fruit farm in Bahawalpur, then joining the match factory in Lahore.[23]

The wealth of the Kauls was always on conspicuous display in Lahore. Bal Kishen Kaul played a role in Lahore similar to that of Moti Lal Nehru in Allahabad with his cars, his mansion, his participation in western style activities. But beneath the veneer, the Kauls cultivated a highly orthodox and conservative way of life. The Nehrus had two kitchens, one for the preparation of western food, and one traditionally Kashmiri. The Kauls had only one kitchen, but employed more Kashmiri Brahman cooks than any other household, and while Moti Lal had very little to do with gurus, the Kaul family purohit lived entirely on their money in property attached to theirs in Lahore.[24]

In spite of their western education (Hari Kishen and Daya Kishen both went to Government College and formed close friendships with such British officials as Walter Lawrence), the Kaul family was Dharm Sabha and adhered to none of the reforms espoused by the Kashmir National Association.[25] Whle the Raina family would go to the weddings of Bishen Sabhites, the Kauls, for example, boycotted these affairs to the end. Furthermore, while Narendra Nath was the generous patron of the Kashmiri Association, the Kauls more typically responded to religious appeals; when the Jawalamukhi temple in Kangra was destroyed by an earthquake in 1905, the Kaul family contributed to its reconstruction.[26] The Kauls were distanced from the Indo-Persian tradition of the U. P.; men in the family studied a bit of Sanskrit until the present generation; and Punjabi was more commonly heard in the palatial Lahore residence than Urdu.

Because their culture was felt to conform closely to the 'rougher' culture of the Punjab, the Kauls did not form marital relations with North Indian Pandits; Suraj Kaul married the daughter of the Patiala family of Matoos; Hari Kishen's wife was the daughter

[23]Ibid. [24]Interview with Mahendra Kishen Kaul.

[25]*Safir-i-Kashmir*, Proceedings of the National Association in Lahore contains no mention of the Kauls as either participants or contributors.

[26]Interviews, Upendra Kishen Kaul and Mahendar Kishen Kaul.

of a Lahore headmaster of Takrus, Daya Kishen's wife was a Shivpuri from Delhi. When a sister was married to the Lucknow *taluqdar* family of Taiminis, there was some concern about compatibility, although the conservative, heavily religious style of the Taiminis was similar to that of the Kauls. The Taimini son-in-law was brought by the Kauls to the service of Jammu and Kashmir, where he became *wazir-i-wazirat*. Had Daya Kishen's sister been sent to Lucknow, the problems would have been greater.[27]

Spending on marriages continued to be extravagant; the Kauls did not pay even nominal attention to the calls of reformers to eliminate display. When Mahendar Kishen Kaul was married to the daughter of Triyogi Nath Tankhwa, an advocate and property-holder in the hills, in 1924, the festivities lasted seven days and cost tens of thousands of rupees.[28]

It was in relation to their women that the Kauls were particularly conservative. The females had far less freedom than those of the other Kashmiri families of comparable status in Lahore. They were educated by governesses at home far longer, and wore *parda* far longer, than the Raina family women.

By the nineteen-twenties, a certain consensus prevailed regarding male Kashmiris. Education abroad was accepted, and there was general agreement to raise the age of marriage. It was about the extent to which women were allowed freedom of movement and access to education that the divisions revolved, and on this subject, the Kauls were the most reluctant to change.

The Kaul family presented the image, in sum, of a cultural hybrid. They combined the martial life style of the Sikh aristrocracy with their vigorous horsemanship and hunting (which was later softened into such activities as racing and polo), with the aggressive entrepreneurship and religious piety of the Hindu commercial classes. They had none of the refinements of the north Indian Pandits, and were proud of that lacking, referring to members of the eastern *biradari* as 'big bellied'.[29]

Despite their orthodoxy, which kept them from being assimilated into other groups, the Kauls did not nurture close relations with the Kashmiri community in general, however, and never built upon the community as a source of influence as did Narendra Nath.

[27]Ibid.
[28]Interview with Mahender Kishen Kaul.
[29]Interview with Upendra Kishen Kaul.

Daya Kishen Kaul set aside an hour every morning at which time he was accessible to anybody who wished to see him: he used his position to secure jobs for relatives; he personified the traditional leadership role; but he did not transform it, as did Narendra Nath.

All the local Kashmiris were invited to Kaul family weddings, but meetings of the Kashmiri Association do not seem to have been graced by the Kaul family. The contrasting styles of the Kauls and the Rainas provide a vivid illustration of changing ways within the community.

The Kashmiris of Lahore managed to diversify occupational pursuits without the differentiation that results in dissolution of community solidarity. In part, this was a reflection of the determination of their leaders, especially Raja Narendra Nath.

Narendra Nath Raina[30] was the great-grandson of Diwan Ganga Ram, whose importance to the Kashmiris under the Khalsa Darbar corresponded to that of his descendant under the British adminstration of the Punjab. Narendra Nath's grandfather, Ajodhia Prasad,, it may be recalled, led Ventura's brigade in the 1845 Sutlej Campaign, but emerged on the other side the next year to serve with Abbott and was named tutor to the under-age Maharaja Dalip Singh in 1849. Although the Pandit's estates had been confiscated at Annexation, he was given a generous pension and, a decade later, extensive replacement *jagirs*. In 1862, he was made Honorary Magistrate of Lahore; the same year his only (and adopted) son, Brij Nath, was nominated an Extra Assistant Commissioner, after serving as a tehsildar under the benign eye of Abbott. Baij Nath died in 1875 of cholera contracted while on a pilgrimage to Kangra, leaving his only son, Narendra Nath, fatherless at the age of eleven, and his estate 40,000 rupees in debt.

Narendra Nath was brought up in Lahore, and was married at fifteen to the daughter of Bisheshar Nath Kaul,[31] who served in the administrative ranks of the North Western Railway. He took both his bachelor's and his master's degrees from Punjab University, in 1885 and 1886 respectively; while a student he joined Guru Datta's Free Debating Club, along with Hari Kishen Kaul, but never joined the Arya Samaj.[32]

[30]Griffith and Massey, *Chiefs*, p. 284.
[31]Interview, Narendra Nath's son, Diwan Anand Kumar, Delhi, March 1979.
[32]Jones, *Arya Dharm*, p. 51.

As the scion of an aristocratic lineage, albeit a recent one, Narendra Nath was granted a seat in the provincial darbar, was made a Diwan as soon as he came of age, and in 1888 was nominated for an assistant commissionership. He remained in the Civil Service until 1916, at which point he resigned in protest at the government policy of denying Indians commissionerships in spite of seniority.[33] Of Narendra Nath, Ravinder Kumar writes, 'Since [he] occupied a prominent position in Lahore as a landed aristocrat, a retired civilian, and a leader of the Hindu community, he was a tower of strength for the Kashmiri Brahmins, barely a thousand in number, who resided in the city.'[34]

Narendra Nath was patron of the first Lahore Kashmir National Association in 1891 and dominated community affairs for the next half century, presiding over the Kashmiri Sabha and its publication, the *Bahar-i-Kashmir*, until 1940. The first conference of the Pandits held in Lahore met at Narendra Nath's home in 1892, the first All-India Conference of the Kashmiris, held in Lahore in 1929, met under the presidential sponsorship of the Raja.

Narendra Nath's early intellectual interests were typical of his generation. His first literary endeavour was a translation of John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty* into Urdu, and he was a contributor to the more thoughtful English language publications such as the *Hindustan Review*.

One typical essay, 'Religion Indispensable for Social Reformers', which appeared in Februàry 1904, reflected the general concern in the Punjab that religion must have social content, both as a reaction against lack of social involvement (in response to the obvious concern of foreign missionaries for the helpless), and in reaction to those who espoused more secular reforms in the name of a godless ideal. Because of its religious moorings, the essay contrasts markedly with the tone of Kashmiri contributors to the *Hindustan Review* from north India, such as Monohar Lal Zutshi, and provided one slight indication of the manner in which religious or communal considerations dominated the debate in the Punjab to a greater extent than in the Northwestern provinces.

'Religion,' wrote the leader of the Kashmiri community of Lahore, 'has an important aspect apart from morality. Religion in the aspect of man's relation to God ministers to a natural craving

[33]Sen, *Punjab's Eminent Hindus*, p. 223.
[34]Kumar, *Rowlatt Satyagraha*, p. 230.

of the human mind and has a psychological basis ....It certainly implies an abnormal condition of mind which makes the atheist feel more confident in himself and more independent than he really should.'[35]

The essay reflects its author's familiarity with Western concepts and reasoning ('the primary object of all moral actions is the better and more effectual preservation of the Individual, the family, the race, or the species'), but they were employed in the defence of traditional concerns:

> The question now is whether the world has outlived the want which religion serves....the question is whether the agnosticism and indifference to religion which is supposed to prevail in Europe is worthy of being transplanted to India. My answer is in the negative. Does not indifference to religion or agnosticism lead to our losing those moral values which involve subordination of the baser to the higher part of human nature?

'In Europe,' Narendra Nath (who had just returned from inspecting the continent) observed, 'the Nation God is taking the place of the Real God.' 'Patriotism cannot furnish a motive force strong enough for self sacrifice of the highest order as it does among European nations. We have no Nation God in visible reality; if it exists at all, it exists as a phantom.'

The essential structure of Hinduism, which was the boundary of Narendra Nath's effective concern, Hindu society (not Indian or Punjabi society) provided no more satisfactory a solution: 'On the other hand, the fourfold division of Hindu society into castes furnishes us at this time with no set of correlative rights and duties. This division gives us no living sociological creed . . . How great are the difficulties in the formation of any altruistic circle beyond caste as homogenous within itself as caste and yet more comprehensive than it.'

Narendra Nath voiced a devout belief in the necessity of reform, but his especial concern seems to have been the fact that 'mere reform and change tends to foster the spirit of disobedience.' Narendra Nath was as much alarmed at the irresponsibility of reformers as he was at the intransigence of conservatives. He wished to reform religion, not to facilitate social reform, but to fortify

[35] *Hindustan Review and Kayastha Samachar*, February 1904, p. 126.

religion: 'All that I want at present is periodical attendance in a a monitheistic Hindu Church. Simplification of ritualism will have to be adopted very gradually.' And even this qualified affirmation of reform was confined only to male Hindus. 'It may be observed the fair sex have not the same power of resistance as we have; it is risky to introduce amongst them the spirit of revolution and a spirit of the defiance of public opinion independently of the softening influence of religion.'[36]

The writings of the Lucknowi Pandit reformer Manohar Lal Zutshi were as expressive of his environment as Narendra Nath's of his very different world. Zutshi was very much a product of Lucknow; while he offered the same analysis of the social ills of his time, he was guided by different values and different ends from those motivating the Lahori. Manohar Lal's underpinnings were far more secular than those of Narendra Nath; he thought more in terms of class than community, favoured refinement over simplicity, and drew his examples from the Urdu and Islamic rather than the English or the Christian which formed the majority of Narendra Nath's quotes. Zutshi, for example, could castigate a contemporary Urdu poet (Hali) for his use of the image of a washerwoman, which he considered 'uncouth'. He thought Lucknowi civilization the epitome— 'everything good comes from Lucknow'— and criticized the Arya Samaj, in typically Lucknowi fashion, for its 'want of urbanity'.[37]

As did Narendra Nath, Zutshi thought the Hindu social system was in dire need of change—but in the opposite direction. In an essay appearing in the *Hindustan Review and Kayastha Samachar* in 1901, he referred to the 'arrested civilization' of India: 'We have perpetuated the unnatural evolution of caste and arrested social and political growth. Caste feeling took the place of national feeling.' He too lamented the lack of sympathy in the average Indian. 'Indian history shows the Hindus have been lacking in social virtues and their downfall may be ascribed to this defect . . . and the chief cause of this defect is the institution of caste and the exclusive, centrifugal spirit it fosters.'[38]

[36]*Hindustan Review and Kayastha Samachar*, February 1904, pp. 126 passim.

[37]Mahohar Lal Zutshi, 'Development of Hindustani Literature' in *Gleanings* (Allahabad, 1933), p. 261 and 'Mushallas of Allahabad', 1921, ibid. p. 91.

[38]Zutshi, 'Caste Conferences and National Progress', *Gleanings*, pp. 12 and 252.

While Narendra Nath would undoubtedly subscribe to this analysis, Zutshi's conclusion that 'we Indians suffer from an overdose of religion' was not that of Narendra Nath. To Zutshi, Japan, which represented a 'rebirth without religion' was the ideal, whereas secularity was a major danger to Narendra Nath.[39] The degree of reform was another source of disagreement between the Punjabi and U. P. Pandits. Zutshi was a strong believer in female education, widow remarriage, and even divorce. In addition, he advocated raising the age of marriage and sanctioned travel abroad. And finally, if Narendra Nath feared a diminution of the religious spirit as a consequence of change, Zutshi's primary fear was that change would result in a loss of identity (not a loss of religion).

As self-conscious leader of the Lahore community, Narendra Nath combined the munificence of the traditional patron with the parliamentary style of the western educated middle-class majority of the Kashmiris of the city. He was always the first to be approached by Kashmiris raising funds for various community charities and causes, and was amenable to requests from those seeking jobs and personal favours. Narendra Nath had extensive contacts in the administration and the educational system, and helped numerous Pandits secure employ.

Narendra Nath used his influence to moderate the pace of change within the community; his approach was conservative but never obdurate. Although the Raina family was Dharm Sabha, his stance was less extreme than other traditionalistists': he refused, for example, to boycott the Bishen Sabhites. His own lifestyle displayed the prerogatives of the wealthy—he combined extravagance with the espousal of moderation.

In his life, Raja Narendra Nath played the role more of patron than reformer. As a model figure, he represented traditional patterns of consumption far more than progressive patterns of restraint. When his daughter was married in 1902, for example, Narendra Nath spent 50,000 rupees on the affair. Festivities included a garden party for the gentry of Lahore with 'sumptuous refreshments'.[40] Although Maharaj Kishen Ghumkhwar did not comment upon this extravagance in the account which appeared in the *Ghamkuar-i-Hind*, other papers adopted a critical tone. The

[39]'Japanese Renaissance', *Hindustan Review*, July 1908, pp. 177, 178.
[40]Vernacular Press, 1902, *Ghumkhwar i Hind*, 1902, 21 June, p. 391.

Rawalpindi *Chaudhwun Sadi* noted, 'It is strange that a gentleman of Diwan Narendra Nath's enlightenment should spend Rs 50,000 for his daughter's wedding without contributing one rupee for public or charitable works. His example will have an injurious effect on the minds of the common people.'[41]

His addresses to various community gatherings voiced confidence in the future of the community, complacency rather than despair governed his outlook. The suggestions which he advanced for the welfare of the community were invariably of a practical, limited nature. Both his understanding of the Pandits' past and his vision of their future were conservative and grounded in Hindu religious values.

When speaking of the history of the community, it was not the synthetic role of the Pandits that he chose to stress but their ability to adapt while retaining their religious faith:

> Although we adopted the language and culture of the Muslims, it did not affect our religious practices. Our rites are still longer than those of most Indian Brahmans. During the Sikhs, although we again had high positions, no Pandit got converted to Sikhism. We kept a good balance between the things we changed and things we never changed.[42]

Narendra Nath conceded that the controversy over Bishen Narain Dar's trip to England had resulted in a certain setback, but professed satisfaction at the later performance of Kashmiris. Speaking in 1929, he noted:

> Now the later generation has produced a number of successes. At present we have six Pandits who, after passing the competitive exam, are in the civil service: 2 Nehrus, 1 Sapru, 1 Kaul, one Dar, and 1 Wanchoo. For a community whose total population is only 5,000 this is very good.[43]

The omnipotence and control of economic resources such as jobs, in addition to 'mere' wealth, enabled Narendra Nath to control the pace and direction of change in the community. Eventually, Narendra Nath conformed to the reformers' call for reduced expenses, but he proved less amenable to summons for more drastic changes. While others debated the wisdom of female education, and the question of marriage outside the community,

[41]Ibid., *Chaudhwun Sadi*, Rawalpindi, 23 June 1902, p. 391.

[42]*Report of the First All Indian Kashmiri Pandits Congerence*, Lahore, 1929 (J. L. Kaul Jalali collection, Srinagar, Kashmir State Archives), p. 24.

[43]Ibid., p. 25.

Narendra Nath refused to allow these extreme issues even on the agenda of several conferences, and addressed himself to less fundamental recommendations. In his speech to the first Kashmiri Conference in Lahore in 1929, Narendra Nath chose to dwell on such shortcomings as the Kashmiris' lack of interest in business and industry:

> Because education is spreading to other communities, we will get a much smaller share of jobs in the future. We must go for other options like industry and business. Unemployment is spreading very fast in India and the communities who depend on service will be worst hit and the Pandits are among them.[44]

The other problem which concerned Narendra Nath was the state of physical health at a time when tuberculosis was reducing the already small population of Pandits. And while many were beginning to advocate the remarriage of widows, Narendra Nath merely pledged his support for a programme to teach widows skills to make widowhood more economicaly viable.

Narendra Nath's refusal to countenance discussion of issues such as endogamy, and the conservative nature of his other proposals became more objectionable as the climate within the community changed. Relations deteriorated between the leader and the mass of the Kashmiri community within Lahore. Patrons were becoming dispensable.

The revolt against the dominance of Narendra Nath was impeded by the fact that meetings were held in the Raina household on Abbott Road. The revolt gathered strength in spite of the potential economic sanctions of the president, however, as Narendra Nath became increasingly autocratic. When certain Pandits were not allowed to read speeches at a Jubilee meeting in Lahore in 1939-40, they had them printed in the *Bahar i Kashmir*, and after Narendra Nath attempted to transform a conference into a poetic symposium, he was ousted from the presidentship in an election. The middle-class Pandits captured the Lahore organization because they felt it had turned into a 'forum for the ego of the rich'.[45] But they were not necessarily interested in implementing radical reforms. They simply felt that the richer Pandits were

[44]*Report of the First All Indian Kashmiri Pandits Conference*, Lahore, 1929, p. 25.

[45]Interview with Pran Nath Pandit, Brij Kishen Gurtoo, and Ravinder Kumar, in Delhi and Allahabad.

ignoring the substantive issues facing the community, issues which could not be resolved over time. It was more Narendra Nath's style than his views that the Pandits found objectionable; many of the Pandits who had originally espoused reform in the pages of community journals became increasingly disenchanted as community boundaries weakened as a result of these changes.

CHAPTER XX

# Politics 1925-1930

The decade after the Lucknow Pact brought increasing difficulty in justifying co-operation with the Muslims and growing disillusion with the fruits of previous attempts to do so.

The 1926 elections revolved almost exclusively around communal concerns. 'It was in 1926 that the Malaviya group established the communal Hindu campaign on an organized basis at the provincial level,' observed Gyanendra Pandey. 'The Hindus had for too long given way to the Muslims, he [Malaviya] said, and it was time they learnt to protect themselves.'[1] Malaviya's campaign was directed less against Muslims than against those Hindus who collaborated with the Muslims, namely, Nehru and the Swaraj Party.

'Nehru and his Swarajist colleagues had begun,' continued Pandey, 'with a clear avowal of a secular policy, arguing that the rights and interests of the two communities were identical and that the Congress stood for complete freedom in matters of religion .... They had strongly opposed Hindu Sabha involvement in the elections.'[2] Gradually, however, over the course of the election campaign, this approach was discarded. Wherever Nehru went, he found himself faced by hostile Hindu questioning concerning his attitude on such disputes as the controversy over playing music in front of masjids. Hecklers charged that he ate beef and was Muslim. 'As it happened,' Pandey concluded, 'Nehru and his colleagues themselves gave way under this communal pressure in the end and adopted something of a Hindu communalist position.'[3]

In letters to his only son, Moti Lal alluded to the pressures to which he was subjected in the course of the campaign. 'It was

[1]Gyanendra Pandey, *Ascendancy of the Congress in Uttar Pradesh 1926-1934* (Oxford, 1978), p. 120.

[2]Ibid., p. 121.

[3]Ibid.

simply beyond me', he wrote to Jawahar Lal in December, 'to meet the kind of propaganda started against me under the auspices of the Malaviya–Lala [Lajpat Rai] gang. Publicly I was denounced as an anti-Hindu and pro-Muhammadan but privately almost every individual voter was told that I was a beef-eater in league with the Muhammadans to legalize cow slaughter in public places at all times . . . .Communal hatred was the order of the day . . . . In the present state of communal tension my voice will be a cry in the wilderness.'[4] Moti Lal was so distressed by the communalists that he informed his son that he was 'thoroughly disgusted and . . . now seriously thinking of retiring from public life.'[5]

In 1928, an All-Parties Conference was formed, with Moti Lal Nehru, in close consultation with Sapru, as its chairman. Its purpose was to study means of promoting harmony between the two religious communities. By this time, there was widespread agreement that the Lucknow Pact had failed in this objective. Sapru conceded this, noting, 'Although the Hindus agreed to separate electorates for the Muslims, they soon realized that instead of promoting harmony, they had widened the gulf between them and the Muslims.'[6] Members of the Conference included many of the supporters of the Jahangirabad Amendment, but their position was less conciliatory than it had been ten years before.

The realization that what was originally envisioned as a temporary measure to further understanding was becoming instead a barrier was evident in Sapru's remarks: 'A legislature, if constituted on the basis of separate communal electorates, in which one community has no opportunity to influence the choice of the representatives of the other community, creates a permanent majority and minority based exclusively on religion from which there is no escape.' Continued Sapru, 'Every election will become an arena of mutual vilification of Hindus and Muslims and the minorities will be at the mercy of a permanent majority of extremists.'[7]

The Nehru Report, according to R. J. Moore, was 'highly significant as the first attempt of Indians to draft a constitution for a free India.'[8] Its recommendations for communal representation were rejected, however, by Muslims on every point of the political

[4]Nehru, *A Bunch of Old Letters*, Letter from Moti Lal, 2 December 1926, pp. 51–2.

[5]Ibid., p. 52.

[6]Sapru, *Welding the Nation*, p. 197.

[7]Ibid., p. 202.

[8]Moore, *Crisis of Indian Unity*, p. 35.

spectrum. The Conference advocated joint electorates with reservation of seats for Muslims only in those provinces where they were a minority. Both separate representation and weightage in excess of population were rejected. The Nehru Report signalled, therefore, the repudiation of their earlier beliefs by Nehru and Sapru, or rather a denial of earlier methods to achieve communal co-operation.

Nehru and Sapru continued to articulate a secular approach in politics, however. As president of the Calcutta Congress of 1928, Nehru alluded to 'the communal differences which have contributed a dark chapter to the recent history of our own times.'[9]

> Can any sane person consider the trivial and ridiculous causes of conflict between Hindu and Muslim or between sect and sect, and not wonder how any one with a grain of sense should be affected by them? . . . It puts artificial barriers between man and man and prevents the development of healthy and cooperative national life. Its association with politics has been to the good of neither. Religion has been degraded and politics has sunk into the mire. Complete divorce of one from the other is the only remedy.[10]

If the rejection of separate electorates was a new development in the U. P. it was an old theme in the politics of the Punjab. Kashmiri Pandits in Lahore, correspondingly, spoke on behalf of communal interests far sooner than their brethren in the Mughal and Nawabi centres of north India.

Narendra Nath was one of the few Hindus in Lahore with whom Muslims could feel a potential sympathy. But from the beginning, Narendra Nath was far more interested in representing Hindu society than in serving as a bridge figure.

In 1901, Murarram Ali had defended Narendra Nath within the pages of the *Rafiq-i-Hind* against charges of prejudice that appeared in the Aligarh press. 'Dewan Narendra Nath's family is especially noted for its friendly relations with Muslims and the Dewan has been brought up in such a way that narrow-mindedness is not part of his character . . . . An attack on such a just, popular, and impartial officer discredits only his assailant.'[11]

[9]Presidential Address delivered at the 43rd session of the Indian National Congress, reproduced in *Pandit Moti Lal Nehru: A Great Patriot* (Delhi, 1976), p. 117.

[10]Ibid., pp. 117–18.

[11]*Vernacular Press*, 1901, *Rafiq-i-Hind*, 31 Aug. 1901, p. 565.

Later that same year, however, the *Paisa Akhbar* published a letter from Gujranwalla highly critical of Narendra Nath, then deputy commissioner of the district. The editor replied in print that he was 'aware that Dewan Narendra Nath has been there several years and has never been accused of favouring Hindus over Muslims, but a reliable correspondent has written to say the Dewan has changed his policy of neutrality.'[12]

In spite of the alleged change of policy, in 1903, the editor of the *Rafiq* still expressed a high opinion of Narendra Nath, whom he described as the 'ornament of the Rais'. Muharram Ali went on to observe that Narendra Nath 'has displayed such tact as to gain the praise not only of Hindus and Muslims but also Anglo-Indians' that he ought to have been mentioned in the Coronation Honours.[13] This enthusiasm, however, was soon to subside.[14]

Narendra Nath served as deputy commissioner in various Punjabi districts until 1911, when he became the first Indian to serve as officiating commissioner. He was barred from further promotion by a circular issed by Sir Reginald Craddock, then Home Member, which stated that no Indian was to be appointed commissioner. In protest, Narendra Nath resigned.[15] Five years later, in 1921, the Pandit entered the Punjab Legislative Council as the representative of the Landholders Constituency, a seat he occupied until 1937.

During these years, the Diwan was deeply involved in the activities of the Hindu Mahasabha. He was president of the provincial Hindu organization for many years and presided over the all-India group in 1926.[16] In December 1924, when Malaviya appointed a committee to formulate explicitly Hindu policy on communal questions, 'the first time the Mahasabha acquired a political orientation',[17] Narendra Nath was one of its members. Narendra Nath summarized his policy in a letter written to C. Y. Chintamani, the Allahabadi editor who, along with Malaviya, led the

[12]*Vernacular Press*, 1901, *Paisa Akhbar*, 21 Sept. 1901, p. 631.

[13]Ibid., 1903, *Rafiq-i-Hind*, 10 January 1903, p. 20.

[14]Narendra Nath's relations with the Hindu press were uneven from an early date, but more because of his varying strategy toward the British than toward the Muslims as he became more overtly a spokesman for the Hindu community.

[15]N. B. Sen, *Punjab's Eminent Hindus*, p. 223.

[16]Ibid., p. 225.

[17]Moore, *Crisis of Indian Unity* p. 18.

wing of the United Provinces Hindu Sabha opposed to co-operation with the Muslims. 'I for one,' said the Kashmiri, 'cannot join any political party unless that party undertakes to protect the just and legitimate rights of the Hindus of the Punjab . . . . As a matter of fact, that is the attitude of all Hindus of the Punjab and that is why no political party takes root here.'[18] Clearly, Narendra Nath did not aspire, as did Nehru and Sapru, to a leadership role in all-Indian politics. His concern lay more in a defence of the interest of Punjab's Hindus.

Sapru spent much of 1929 organizing the first Round-Table Conference. 'There were difficulties in securing the co-operation of the Hindu Mahasabha and there was considerable Hindu–Muslim acerbity,' noted D. A. Low. 'Here the fact that Sapru was a Kashmiri Pandit with a deep love of Urdu and Persian stood him in excellent stead. He was a Brahman but much of his culture was Muslim in origin. When coupled with his personal qualities— his renowned personal integrity—this made him a formidable mediator. . . . .Both [Muslim leaders and Hindu leaders] ended up by agreeing to attend an all-Parties Conference under Sapru's Chairmanship.[19]

Before confronting the British with a demand for greater autonomy, whether this was to take the form of independent or dominion status, Sapru thought it essential that the Indians work out their own internal divisions. 'If we can present a united front it is the opinion of some of my most intimate friends, and I share that opinion, that we have got a chance of achieving Dominion Status.'[20] Sapru was less ready than in the past, however, to concede the principles conceded in the Jahangirabad Amendment. He felt, as did Nehru, that separate electorates impeded the development of national sentiment. The Liberal Party, led by Sapru, began by offering reserved seats, rather than separate electorates to the Muslims. 'The Muslims,' wrote R. J. Moore,

[18]Gordon, 'Hindu Mahasabha', p. 182.

[19]D. A. Low, 'Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and the First Round Table Conference', in *Soundings in Modern South Asian History*, ed. D. A. Low (London, 1968), p. 307.

[20]Moore, *Crisis of Indian Unity*, p. 125, quoting Sapru letter of 12 Nov. 1930 to Iswar Saran, Sapru Collection, S-18.

'agreed to joint electorates in the provinces and at the centre, with reservation of seats for minorities on a population basis; except that Bengal and the Punjab were to negotiate their own communal arrangements.'[21] This was in November.

In December, agreement among the various participants was still not forthcoming. Sapru once again attempted to achieve some sort of consensus based on the principle of joint electorates. According to Moore, Sapru was willing to make more generous concessions to Muslims, 'which except for the majority in the Punjab, the Mahasabhites now seemed ready to approve.'[22]

At one point in the negotiations, with prior agreement on joint electorates, Liberal politicians approached Muslims with an offer of a fifty-one per cent majority in the Punjab. The Sikhs were opposed, but more interesting was the fact that Narendra Nath, who was privately amenable to the proposal, was not prepared to commit himself publicly to it, and as cables from the Hindu Sabhas flooded in, Narendra Nath backed down altogether.[23]

Two days later, an increasingly desperate Sapru was ready to accept separate electorates. 'I shall regret these results,' he wrote, 'but I shall not stand in the way of a settlement even on the basis of Separate Electorates which I hate very much.'[24] In January, the Conference was dissolved; the failure to come to a communal agreement proved fatal. In the end, 'the point of difference between the two communities,' noted Moore, 'was narrowed to 1 or 2 per cent of the seats in the Punjab.' Both the Punjabi Sikh delegate, Ujjal Singh, and Narendra Nath withheld support. Narendra Nath ultimately was unwilling to inflict the cost of an agreement between the religious communities of India upon the Hindus of his province.[25]

In later years, Narendra Nath defended his stance: 'My liberal friends may accuse me of taking a provincial view,' he wrote in 1933. This view, however, 'covers the interest of nearly 30 millions of people. But my liberal friends coming from provinces in which their co-religionists are in a majority are also open to the charge of provincialism. The differences of caste and creed stand in the way

[21]Ibid.

[22]Ibid.,p. 159.

[23]Ibid., p. 161,

[24]Ibid., quoting letter from Sapru to Thompson, 29 Dec. 1930, Sapru Letters, T-19.

[25]Moore, *Crisis of Indian Unity*.

of self government. What about a constitution that perpetuates these differences?'[26]

Sapru resigned from the Liberal party, 'partly because many of its members suspected him of having become pro-Muslim.'[27] The attempt to form a bridge left Sapru stranded. Narendra Nath returned to India as he had departed, the champion of the minority Hindu population of the Punjab. The concerns that dominated Narendra Nath were far more pragmatic than those of the idealistic Sapru. Sapru focused on the welfare of all, Narendra Nath worried about the welfare of the few.

This concern was also apparent in the issues of interest to Narendra Nath within the province. If separate electorates and reservation conceded on an all-India level threatened the minority Hindu community within the province, the Hindus were equally threatened by the communalization of the administration and the insistence that there be reservation in the government as well as in electoral politics. Although Narendra Nath's awareness of this problem arose from the specific social situation of the Punjab, he was anticipating trends that would soon come to mark other regions of India as well.

Narendra Nath's concern with communalization of administration in the Punjab originated in the double cleavage characterizing Punjabi society, where the religious division was accompanied by an equally sharp and bitter cleavage between the urban groups and the 'agricultural tribes'. 'Punjab politics have some peculiar features of their own,' said Narendra Nath of his province. 'The octopus of communal or caste discrimination has thrown its tentacles wider in the Punjab than anywhere else.'[28]

Narendra Nath viewed the Hindus as a minority doubly victimized, both because of their religion and because of their residence in the cities. In addition to separate electorates which would mean a permanent Muslim majority, Hindus faced a Punjabi Government Resolution of 1919, 'giving preference to hereditary zamindars [the majority of whom belong to agricultural tribes] for recruitment into services of all kinds.'[29] Continued the Pandit, 'The

[26]*Address by Raja Narendra Nath Dealing with the Case of the Hindu Minority in Different Provinces and Delivered at a Conference Held at Multan in 1933* (Lahore, 1933), p. 26.

[27]Moore, *Crisis of Indian Unity*, p. 159.

[28]Narendra Nath, *Address in Multan*, p. 2.

[29]Raja Narendra Nath, *Memorandum on the Rights of the Hindu Minorities*(Lahore, 1928), pp. 95, 97.

Punjab is the only province in which to belong to an urban area entails several disqualifications. The resolution creates a partial monopoly of the rural castes.'

Years before positive discrimination became a major issue, Narendra Nath refuted claims for preferential treatment for entry into government service for the hitherto excluded. In so doing, he appealed to an 1834 dispatch of the East India Company which stated, 'we take it to be that there shall be no governing caste in India and that whatever other tests of qualifications may be adopted, distinction of race and religion shall not be among them.' He also evoked the image of a non-partisan non-sectarian administration— that of the Mughals. 'In Muslim India, there was never any governing caste .... There was not a caste but a group of castes from which officers were recruited. As people living in urban areas had better facilities for acquiring education than those living in the country .... the urban population naturally got more posts.'[30]

Communal representation in the services, which would penalize the literate elites of the city, was as objectionable to Narendra Nath as the separate electorates which would create a permanent Muslim majority. 'The question is whether the scope of communal representation should be extended so as to cover other spheres of administration, such as recruitment to services and admission to educational institutions. The Hindu and Sikh opinion on this question is unanimous in condemning any extension of communal representation.'[31] As head of the Hindu Mahasabha, the Kashmiri Raja presided over the implementation of a resolution condemning discrimination by caste and creed in respect of acquisition of civic rights or posts in public service. The opposition to communal discrimination reflected both the perpetuation of vertical caste ties and new horizontal links. In championing the traditional interest of his own community— access to administrative service— Narendra Nath was representing as well an urban Hindu caste coalition. There was a mutuality of interest in the two constituencies he led, the Pandit community and Hindu society—a correspondence denied to Sapru.

At the same time as Narendra Nath was defending the interests of Hindu literate communities in public forums, in numerous speeches at community gatherings, and in articles published in the of his own community—access to administrative service—

[30]Ibid., pp. 94, 95.
[31]Ibid., p. 97.

Kashmiri journal *Bahar-i-Kashmir*, he warned his fellow Pandits that they had to end their dependence on government service. Warnings that had been issued by the leadership of the community for forty years acquired new cogency with the threat of communal representation in government. Narendra Nath anticipated that the fight against restrictions on the traditional service groups' access to administrative positions was a losing battle. The places available to the traditionally literate would dwindle and become scarce.

The history of the Kashmiri Pandits in this period is not so much the history of a social group left stranded by the commitment to a culture no longer in existence but of a gradual shifting of the centre of gravity within the community. This shift resulted in a rapprochement with a newly-created 'majority' or 'Hindu' tradition of north India, but it would be a mistake to see the outcome as simply the revival of those elements in the Kashmiri heritage which were part of their pre-Mughal trappings. The Kashmiri identity was being constructed far more than being restored.

# Appendix

## Interviews (in 1979)

| | |
|---|---|
| Bahadur, J. N. | 7 August, Delhi. |
| Bakshi, P. N. | 28 April, Allahabad. |
| Bakshi, U. | 31 May, Lucknow. |
| Bandu, K. | 25 July, Kashmir. |
| Bazaz, P. N. | 18 February, 29 March, Delhi. |
| Bhan, T. N. | 18 August, Delhi. |
| Dar, J. L. | 27 April, 13 May, Allahabad. |
| Dar, A. | 22 May, Allahabad. |
| Dar, I. | 5 June, Lucknow. |
| Dar, S. | 30 August, Delhi. |
| Gurtoo, B. K. | 1 June, Lucknow. |
| Gurtoo, G. K. | 26 August, Delhi. |
| Handoo, G. N. | 28 August, Delhi. |
| Haksar, M. N. | 27 August, Delhi. |
| Haksar, R. N. | 7 March, Delhi. |
| Kak, R. C. | 25 July, Srinagar. |
| Kalla, | 5 August, Delhi. |
| Katju, S. N. | 23, 25 April, 13, 15 May, Allahabad. |
| Kaul, A. N. | 12 June, Lucknow. |
| Kaul, M. K. | 19 August, Delhi. |
| Kaul, M. M. | 23 August, Delhi. |
| Kaul, P. M. | 28 August, Delhi. |
| Kaul, P. K. | 30 May, Lucknow. |
| Kaul, R. | 25 May, Allahabad. |
| Kaul, S. N. | 20 August, Delhi. |
| Kaul, U. K. | 7 May, Delhi. |
| Khan, (Nehru) S. K. | 19 May, Allahabad. |
| Kitchloo, J. K. | 25 August, Delhi. |
| Kitchloo, S. N. | 28 May, Lucknow. |
| Kunzru, G. N. | 19 April, Allahabad. |
| Langer, G. L. | 5 June, Lucknow. |
| Madan, J. N. | 12 August, Delhi. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Mulla, A. N. | 22 August, Delhi. |
| Mulla, S. N. | 22 April, 25 May, Allahabad. |
| Mushran, S. N. | 29 May, Lucknow. |
| Nehru, R. K. | 19, 24 April, 11, 27 May, Allahabad. |
| Parmu, R. K. | 28 February, Jammu. |
| Pushp, P. N. | 1 March, Jammu; 23 July, Srinagar. |
| Pandit, P. N. | May, June, July, August, Delhi. |
| Raina, B. L. | 13 August, Delhi. |
| Raina, Diwan Anand Kumar | 22 February, Delhi. |
| Raja Guru. | 4 June, Lucknow. |
| Sapru, Kamla. | 11, 17 April, Allahabad. |
| Sapru, Mrs Kishen | 18 April, Allahabad. |
| Sapru, Mrs S. | 20, 28 April, 14, 16 May, Allahabad. |
| Sapru, S. N. | 25 August, Delhi. |
| Shangloo, D. F. | 2 June, Lucknow. |
| Sharga, O. N. | 29 April, 13 May, Allahabad. |
| Shivpuri, H. N. | 11 June, Lucknow. |
| Tikku, N. N. | 25 March, Delhi. |
| Tikku, | 21 May, Allahabad. |
| Taimini, J. P. | 21 August, Delhi. |
| Wanchoo, | 2 June, Lucknow. |
| Wanchoo, N. N. | 7 August, Delhi. |
| Zutshi, H. M. & S. M. | 18 March, Delhi. |
| Zutshi, R. | 29 April, Allahabad. |
| Zutshi, R. M. N. | 30 August, Delhi. |

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